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A C A D I A N E D U C A T I O N

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N O V A S C O T I A

AN HISTORICAL SURVEY

by

George Rawlyk and Ruth Hafter

August, 1965


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R E S U M E

Since early in the 17th century Nova Scotia has been compelled to deal with the often thorny problem of Acadian education. During the 17th century two significant forces - the influence of the Roman Catholic clergy and the general indifference to education on the part of many Acadians - had a profound impact upon the development of education among the French-speaking inhabitants. And these forces were destined to continue to play a most vital role throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

After the Expulsion of 1755, the Acadians who lived in Nova Scotia were considered to be second-class citizens by the governmental authorities who were eager to see the Acadians gradually assimilated into the British way of life. Throughout the 19th century, with the notable exception of the Education Act of 1841, the policy of the educational authorities was to encourage this assimilation. But largely because of their isolation and the assiduous labour of their priests, the Acadians were able to resist total assimilation.

The recommendation of the Acadian Commission of 1902 and the reforms finally introduced in 1939 did not establish a viable bilingual system of education in the French-speaking areas of the province. And it seems that the educational authorities, in pursuing such a policy, were in fact reflecting the point of view of most Acadians. These people wanted more English rather than more French in their schools. The Acadians had become Nova Scotians.

CHAPTER I

BEGINNINGS: 1604 - 1864

Almost since its founding in 1604 by De Monts and Champlain, Nova Scotia[1] has had to deal with the often perplexing problem of Acadian education. Thus, the contemporary situation regarding the education of Acadians must be seen in its full historical context. Only then will a perceptive appreciation of the present be possible.

Acadian educational development in Nova Scotia from 1604 to 1864 can be roughly divided into four major periods. The first of these began in 1604 and the second in 1713, when, by the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht, Acadia or Nova Scotia became British territory but Isle Royale or Cape Breton Island remained in French hands. At the start of the third period, in 1755, most of the Acadian inhabitants in Nova Scotia were expelled. The fourth period commenced with the declaration in 1841 by the Nova Scotia government that any school "wherein ordinary instruction might be in French, Gaelic or German, was also to be entitled to a portion of the public money."[2] This final period came to a close in 1864 when the Free School Act was introduced by the Tupper administration. Among other things the Act discouraged provincial grants to

schools where instruction was given in any other language but English.

In each of these four periods, the Roman Catholic Church played a vitally important role in Acadian education. Without the assistance of this Church, there would have been little if any educational progress in the various Acadian communities. Furthermore, in each of these periods, in spite of the positive educational contributions made by the Church, probably a majority of Acadians remained indifferent, if not openly opposed, to even the most rudimentary kind of education. It was frequently declared by these Acadians:

> J'ai vécu sans savoir lire...
> mes affairs n'en ont pas marché
> plus mal; que mes enfants fassent comme moi.[3]

1604-1713

Throughout the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century it was Nova Scotia's misfortune to be the "eastern outpost and flank for both French and English in North America." [4] Many New Englanders regarded Nova Scotia as their northeastern frontier and as a vitally important stepping-stone to the valuable North Atlantic fishery and to the St. Lawrence region. The French, on the other hand, tended to consider Nova Scotia as their eastern vantage-point of military and commercial

empire in North America. Many Frenchmen and Englishmen in the New World were convinced that the possession of Nova Scotia was the strategic key to the eventual control of the vast interior of the northern half of the continent as well as the key to the control of the "Empire of the North Atlantic."

Ground between the millstones of French and English rivalry in North America, the Acadian inhabitants of Nova Scotia felt it expedient to become "neutrals". As late as 1755, most of the Acadians were not absolutely certain whether the French or the English would eventually emerge supreme in Nova Scotia. They were eager to remain on their rich farm lands and unwilling to support what might be the losing side in any conflict. The instability of their situation made education a minor consideration and significant educational advances difficult to achieve.

The period from 1604 to 1713 has sometimes been referred to as the French period of Nova Scotia's history. However, it would be far more accurate to describe it as the Franco-New England period. For during the d'Aulnay-LaTour power struggle, Massachusetts played a crucial role in Nova Scotian affairs. Furthermore, in 1654 an expedition under the command of Major Robert Sedgwick sailed from Boston, captured Port Royal, and the English then assumed control of all of Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia was not returned to the French until 1670. During King William's

War (1689-1697) Port Royal was once again captured by Sir William Phips and then returned to the French. But during Queen Anne's War (1702-1713) Nova Scotia was seized by a New England force under the command of Francis Nicholson. Unlike the Treaty of Ryswick of 1697, the Treaty of Utrecht did not restore the status quo ante bellum. Nova Scotia, apart from Cape Breton Island, was now British territory. To neutralize British control of Nova Scotia, the French decided to build Louisbourg, destined to become their "Dunkirk of North America."

In 1670 the population of Nova Scotia was estimated to be less than 500. By 1713 it had grown to almost 2500. This was a remarkable increase, especially when the generally unstable conditions are taken into consideration. The Acadians were a self-sufficient people. They were not very much concerned with the outside world and its problems. Perhaps their only significant bond with Europe was their religion, carefully nurtured by their devoted priests. By the beginning of the second decade of the 18th century they had developed certain characteristics that gave them an almost unique identity. J. B. Brebner has perceptively described the Acadians thus:

> In general, it may be concluded that they were completely competent in a practical way; blessed in the possession of a fertile and easily worked land, and therefore not ridden by a passionate industry; lacking stimulation and criticism from abroad; and

> content to live for generations much as their fathers had done.
>
> They had all the homely virtues - self-reliance, courage, practicality, thrift, sobriety, health, hospitality, social equality, marital fidelity, religious piety and cheerfulness. It is more difficult to list their vices. Doubtless they were frail as all humanity is frail, but most of the weaknesses credited to them were determined by alien standards.... They were often accused of greed and avarice.... Quite the commonest charge against them was that they were lazy, too fond of holidays and frolics... stubborn, stupid, suspicious, and contentious among themselves.[5]

Until the arrival in 1632 of a small band of Capuchin monks at La Have, near present day Bridgewater, the religious life of Nova Scotia had been dominated first by the Jesuits and then by the Récollets. The Jesuits, Récollets, and the Capuchins, in the 1630's at least, were primarily concerned with converting the aborigines to Christianity. The spiritual and educational development of the French settlers was therefore considered to be of secondary importance. It is noteworthy that the first school established in Nova Scotia was a school for Indian boys. This "Seminary", as it was called, was probably begun by the Capuchins at La Have in 1633. Three years later the Capuchin school was transferred to Port Royal.

The Capuchins placed a great deal of emphasis upon persuading the Indians to appropriate most aspects of European civilization. It was therefore felt that much greater

progress would be made if the Indian boys and some of the Acadian lads were taught together. Thus the Capuchins could perform two important functions at the same time: the Indian boys would learn the ways of Western civilization from their Acadian classmates and the Acadian students could be educated. By 1643 there were at least twelve Capuchin missionaries and teachers in Nova Scotia and since most of the Acadians lived in the Port Royal area there was no valid reason why their children could not be educated. Furthermore, sometime between 1636 and 1641 a school for Indian girls was founded in Port Royal by the Capuchins and French girls were encouraged to attend this new school.[6]

There were day students and boarders at both Capuchin schools. Acadian children sat next to Indian children on the benches in the class-rooms. The educational programme offered, it had been argued, "n'étaient pas si élémentaires qu'on pourrait se l'imaginer."[7] Gifted Acadian children, if they were willing to study conscientiously, were apparently encouraged to do relatively advanced academic work. The educational opportunities offered to the Acadian settlers in Nova Scotia by the Capuchins were certainly superior to those offered to their fellows in France and at least equal to those offered in Great Britain and New England to people of similar circumstances.[8] Educational opportunities provided by the Capuchins for the Acadians from 1633 to 1654 would not be equalled until the 20th century.

In 1654 when Port Royal was captured by Sedgwick, the Capuchin schools were destroyed and eventually all of the Capuchin missionaries were forced to leave Nova Scotia. After Nova Scotia was returned to the French, the Indian schools were not rebuilt.[9] There were two main reasons for their not being rebuilt. First, the Capuchins had made very little real progress in educating the Indian youngsters and hence came to the conclusion that they were wasting their time and money in a hopeless and unrewarding task. Second, it was feared that if the schools were rebuilt they would eventually be destroyed by the English.[10]

There was little effective organized educational activity among the Acadians after the withdrawal of the Capuchins. Some of the Récollet and Sulpician priests who came to Nova Scotia after 1670 attempted to do something about Acadian education. But their efforts were feeble when compared to those of the Capuchins. Without the persistent prodding of the dedicated Capuchins and because of the constant threat from New England, some Acadians became coldly indifferent to education during the years from 1654 to 1713. It was argued that being able to read and to write did not protect the Acadians from English raids nor did these skills make them better farmers or better fishermen.

However, other Acadians found it extremely difficult to forget what the Capuchins had taught them. In 1713

approximately one half of the Acadian male population was apparently literate.[12] It should be borne in mind that the ability to mérely write one's name was of no gre great value to a man of the seventeenth century or eighteenth century - unlike the twentieth century. It seems clear that "the genuinely illiterate had therefore no incentive to learn this particular trick and nothing more."[13] To argue that the Acadians in the early part of the eighteenth century "remained in comparative illiteracy[14] and only "a few of them [could] write"[15] is to close one's eyes to the historical realities of the situation.

1713-1755

By 1755 the Acadian population of Nova Scotia had grown to over 14,000. "Like Noah's progeny" the Acadians were "spreading themselves over the face of the Province."[16] In addition, in 1755 there were over 5000 French inhabitants in Cape Breton Island, some of whom were of Acadian stock. Cape Breton Island was virtually nothing more than the fortress of Louisbourg. Since the French military authorities were primarily concerned with the Anglo-American threat, little attention was paid to the education of the settlers. However, there was a small convent in Louisbourg run by the Sisters of the

Congregation and undoubtedly some of the Louisbourg officers and some wealthy merchants hired private tutors for their children.[17] But the vast majority of inhabitants, unlike many Acadian Nova Scotians, had no educational opportunities whatsoever.

In spite of the diffuse nature of Acadian settlement in Nova Scotia after 1713 and in spite of the inadequate number of priests, tge level of literacy probably declined only slightly. Nevertheless, indifference to education became more widespread. P.B. Thibeau, an authority on Acadian education, has argued that:

> The capitulation of Acadia to the English changed the aspect of French education in the country forever after.... Removed from educational influences and deprived of the services of their priests [the Acadians] remained in comparative illiteracy. They seemed, indeed, to have lost the educational sense and their descendants, though numerous in certain sections of the province, remained, for long, rather outside the pale of educational interest.[18]

Thibeau's analysis of the post-1713 period can be questioned on

at least two major points. First, the Treaty of Utrecht did not drastically change "the aspect of French education in the country forever after." Acadian education in Nova Scotia from 1713 to 1755 was quite similar to that from 1670 to 1713. The forces of educational continuity were far more powerful than the forces of educational change. Second, Thibeau unquestionaly paints an altogether distorted picture of Acadian "illiteracy". Thibeau's severest critic is Thibeau himself. For Thibeau also declared that approximately 60% of the Acadians during this period were able to write.[19] Furthermore, it is another authority's opinion - that of J.H. Bingay, a confessed Anglophile:

> ...that fifty percent of the signatures to the petitions, sent from time to time by the Acadians to the English government at Annapolis, are by the petitioners' own hands. This indicates a moderate diffusion among them of at least the rudiments of education.[20]

Despite the fact that both Thibeau's and Bingay's percentages appear to be somewhat inflated - 30% might be closer to the truth[21] - it seems clear that a significant number of Acadians were not suffering from "comparative illiteracy".

It was not until 1749 that the British government began to show some interest in Acadian education. In that year the Lords of Trade maintained that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.) should be concerned with transforming the estimated 20,000 Acadian Roman Catholics into Protestant Englishmen:

> Their Lordships would recommend it to the consideration of the Society, whether it may not be advisable to choose some amongst others of the ministers and schoolmasters to be sent, who by speaking the French language, may be particularly useful in cultivating a sense of the true Protestant religion among the said inhabitants, and educating their children in the principles thereof.[22]

The Lords of Trade had been influenced in their thinking by William Shirley, Governor of Massachusetts, who had written to his patron, the Duke of Newcastle, in August 1746:

> By...removing the Romish priests out of the Province and introducing Protestant English Schools, and French Protestant Ministers, and due encouragement given to such of the Inhabitants, as shall conform to the Protestant Religion, and send their Children to English Schools... the next Generation in a great measure [would] become true Protestant Subjects.[23]

Shirley's scheme was never implemented by the S.P.G. However, a French-speaking Protestant missionary was chosen to serve in Nova Scotia. He was the Reverend J.B. Moreau, a converted Roman Catholic priest from Brest, but Moreau was appointed missionary and schoolmaster to the French Protestants who had settled in the Lunenburg area.[24] The Acadians were not bothered by Protestant English missionaries or schoolmasters. Before the Lords of Trade could exert pressure on the S.P.G. to do something

about the Acadians, a solution had been found to the Acadian problem; that solution was expulsion.

1755-1841

The expulsion of 1755 and the fall of Louisbourg three years later did not result in the total removal of all Acadians from Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island. A few had been able to avoid expulsion by hiding in the forests; others were "prisonniers à Halifax ou travaillaient comme de véritables mercenaries au profit de leurs maîtres."[25] It has been estimated that in 1767 there were over 1700 Acadians in Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island.[26] Unable to get rid of the Acadians, the British government in 1764 decided to permit the Acadians to settle in Nova Scotia and Cape Breton provided that they lived in small isolated communities and also on condition that they swore an unqualified oath of allegiance.

In 1767 some Acadians who had remained in Nova Scotia after 1755 and others who had returned from exile began to settle in the Pubnico-Eel Brook area in southwestern Nova Scotia. The following year, other Acadians began to settle along St. Mary's Bay.[27] At least two years before the first Acadian landed at Pubnico in 1767, there were already "28 familles de pêcheurs français à l'Ile Madame, travaillant pour le compte d'un patron jérsiais."[28] At first these French fishermen on Cape Breton Island had little in common with the Acadians but a common language and religion eventually brought the two groups together.

There were also Acadian communities in the Tracadie region, east of Antigonish. Furthermore, during the last two decades of the 18th century scores of Acadian families, many that had been driven to St. Pierre and Miquelon and the north shore of present-day New Brunswick after 1755, began to establish settlements at Cheticamp and Margaree on the west coast of Cape Breton. In 1782 there were only two families in Cheticamp but in 1809 there were 226 Acadians in Cheticamp and 200 in Margaree.[29] By 1800 there were two major Acadian areas - the one in southwestern Nova Scotia and the other in the south and west of Cape Breton Island. These two areas had little contact with each other; their historical development had been quite different and there would always be a considerable chasm between the two Acadian communities.

It was the clear intent of the Nova Scotia government to have the established Church of England control all education in the colony. In 1766 an Educational Act was passed by the Legislature and this Act laid down the broad outlines of educational policy. All teaching licenses for "grammar school" teachers were to be issued by the Church of England ministers or by justices of the peace who were appointed by the governmental authorities in Halifax. Furthermore, it was declared that:

> ...if any popish recusant, papist or person professing the popish religion, shall be so presumptuous as to set up any school within this province, and be detected therein, such

> offender shall, for every such offence, suffer three months imprisonment without bail or mainprize, and shall pay a fine to the King of ten pounds.[30]

Acadian historians of the 20th century were apparently far more concerned about the evil consequences of the Educational Act of 1766 than the Acadians living in the latter half of the 18th century were. P.W. Thibeau was of the opinion that the Act was "disastrous" since the Acadians "for many years [were] deprived of the benefits of education."[31] Le Grésley denounced the Act as being responsible for "la misère extrême des Français."[32] Both men have grossly exaggerated the consequences and the significance of the Act. The Act did not prevent priests from teaching from the pulpit nor did it prevent them for giving or arranging for private lessons. Moreover, twenty years later in 1786, most of the prohibitions placed upon Roman Catholic education were removed. This "Catholic emancipation in respect to education"[33] had no immediate effect upon Acadian education. For the Acadians were too busy in developing their new settlements and a serious shortage of priests made educational progress impossible.[34] Without governmental assistance and without the constant prodding of their priests, the Acadians had become increasingly indifferent to education. And this indifference thrived because of the "feeling of a conquered race among them... [and] a sense of helplessness."[35]

Just when this indifference to Acadian education in southwestern Nova Scotia threatened to develop into hostility the Abbé Jean-Mandé Sigogne arrived in the region. Sigogne has been called "The Apostle of the Acadians of Yarmouth and Digby Counties."[36] No one man before or since has exerted such a profound influence upon the Nova Scotia Acadian community. After assiduous labour Sigogne succeeded in instilling some sense of racial pride into his parishioners. He also was able to persuade many of them that in Nova Scotia it was best for the Acadians to have one foot firmly planted in their French and Roman Catholic past and another in the English Nova Scotia present and future. Sigogne was a man who preached and lived bilingualism and biculturalism.

Sigogne arrived at Sainte-Anne-Du-Ruisseau (Eel-Brook) in July, 1799. He had fled to England from a Revolutionary France in 1797. While in England he was persuaded to come to Nova Scotia to work among the Acadians in the southwestern part of the province.[37] Soon after his arrival at Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau he drew up a list of twenty-eight articles for his parishioners to sign. Of the sixty-eight adult males who signed the document only twenty-two could write their own names.[38] Thus it is not surprising that Article XX was inserted by Sigogne:

> With regard to religion and instruction, there shall be selected in each community, two Catechists of good morals, piety and devotion.... It shall be their duty to teach catechism in their community every Sunday and three times each

> week during the year.... The Catechists may also instruct in reading and writing, if they can, for which work the salary shall be increased accordingly.[39]

Much to the disgust of the Acadians in the Sainte-Anne du-Ruisseau region, after spending only two months in the area, Sigogne decided to establish himself permanently in the more populous St. Mary's Bay area. From 1799 to 1819, Sigogne was the only Acadian priest in southwestern Nova Scotia. Most of his time, therefore, had to be spent on purely religious matters. But what is amazing is that in spite of his religious responsibilities and his onerous responsibilities as Justice of the Peace, he still had time and energy for Acadian education.[40]

In his rectory he organized a boarding school and he encouraged promising boys to attend.[41] In 1840 he organized a convent for girls, the "Maison de Sainte-Marthe".[42] But the convent only lasted until 1843, a year before Sigogne's death.

Sigogne realized that his boarding school only scratched the surface of the educational problem. He felt the same way about the school at nearby Petit Ruisseau run by Louis-Pierre Brunet, an emigrant from France.[43] The teaching Catechists referred to in Sigogne's Regulations had accomplished very little. Seeing that illiteracy was growing at a dangerous rate, Sigogne decided, probably in 1820, to mount a major offensive against illiteracy. He informed his parishioners:

Il y a longtemps, chrétiens, que je déplore l'ignorance qui règne ici et à laquelle j'ai inutilement cherché à remédier. Les moyens m'ont souvent fait défaut et les précautions prises par moi n'ont eu près de vous aucun succès. Est-ce indifférence de votre part, indocilité des enfants, ou conséquence des circonstances présentes? je l'ignore; mais j'ai constaté que, des enfants qui assistent au catéchisme, à peine la moitié est en état de répondre aux questions posées. J'avoue que, par suite du petit nombre de personnes sachant lire, l'instruction est assez difficile à acquérir; mais les difficultés existent en toutes choses, et on peut les surmonter avec plus de courage et de zèle. Rien sans peine, c'est le vieil adage, et je suis tenté de conclure que, si les enfants ne sont pas mieux instruits, c'est que l'on ne s'est donné aucune peine pour les enseigner.

L'ignorance, vous le savez, est un vice; elle vous place de plus dans un état d'infériorité vis-à-vis des personnes instruites. Regardez autour de vous; vos voisins profitent de toutes les facilités qu'ils ont de donner à leurs enfants une sérieuse instruction, afin de les préparer à traiter eux-mêmes leurs propres affairs, et ils ont recours à la contrainte, si les enfants résistent à leur volonté. Vous avez le même temps qu'eux, votre intelligence n'est point inférieure à la leur, il ne vous manque que le zèle et l'émulation.

Il existe dans beaucoup de paroisses des écoles du dimanche, pour ceux qui n'ont pas eu le temps ou la facilité de s'instruire pendant la semaine. Ayant reçu quelque assistance pour l'enseignement, j'ai formé le dessein de faire tenir une école, le dimanche, dans les

> Galeries de l'église pendant trois heures, une heure et demie avant les vêpres et autant après. On enseignera la lecture et l'écriture.... l'enseignement de la lecture et du catéchisme sera gratuit et que le course d'écriture, qui exigera un matériel spécial, sera donné pour une légère rétribution.
>
> J'exhorte beaucoup les jeunes gens à y venir et j'invite les parents à favoriser de tout leur pouvoir cette institution. Vous n'aurez qu'à vous en prendre à vous-même de votre ignorance, si vous négligez ce moyen qui vous est offert de vous instruire.[44]

It is impossible to be absolutely certain how effective Sigogne's Sunday-School system actually was. However, there is some evidence to suggest that it had an insignificant impact upon Acadian illiteracy. Sigogne's plan, it must be noted, was restricted to the St. Mary's Bay area and even here many Acadians, because of distance, found it difficult to attend mass every Sunday. Moreover, in 1829, Sigogne felt compelled to petition the Nova Scotia government for a special grant of money "to encourage education and promote knowledge amongst a people who is mostly ignorant of the first elements of Letters."[45] By 1829 Sigogne had apparently come to the conclusion that without governmental assistance there would be little educational progress in the Acadian communities. But governmental financial assistance for educational purposes was carefully restricted by the terms of acts passed by the Legislature

in 1826, 1828 and 1832. These acts provided for extremely limited governmental financial assistance for elementary education in those areas where the inhabitants not only built their own schools but also promised to pay their teachers a minimum yearly salary of £50. This change in governmental policy was directly responsible for a marked increase in the number of schools in operation in Nova Scotia. But these schools still only provided educational facilities for a minority of the student population. Apparently few Acadian communities benefitted from the change in governmental policy. Since most Acadians were either unwilling or unable to raise funds for the construction of school-houses and teachers' salaries there was no government subsidy for them.

While Abbé Sigogne was labouring in his vast parish during the period from 1799 to 1841, sometimes with the help of other clergy but more often without, there were a few educational advances taking place in the Acadian communities in Cape Breton and in the Tracadie region. Exiles from France, such men as François Lefort, Louis Lehuidée, Jean Bourgeois and John Cartret, who had settled in the Cheticamp region were encouraged by the priests to teach the Acadian children how to read and write. These men, who were also assisted by at least two women, Sophique Beaudin and Josephine Thériault, were only part-time teachers and they made little real educational headway.[47] Perhaps a fitting

monument to the true state of Acadian education in the area was the construction, probably in the 1830's, of two tiny school houses. Each of these schools was fifteen feet wide and fifteen feet long.[48] In all likelihood, the educational situation for the Acadians in the Arichat and Tracadie regions was even worse. It is not surprising then that one visitor to Cape Breton commented thus in 1832 on the educational situation:

> La partie indigène de la population est presque sans aucun moyen de s'instruire et la population en général peut être considéré comme très mal pourvue des moyens d'acquérir même les premiers éléments de l'éducation.[49]

The backwardness of Acadian education during the period from 1755 to 1841 must be seen in its Nova Scotia context. Most isolated rural areas in the colony provided few educational opportunities for children. Illiteracy was widespread. In March, 1825, a joint committee of the Nova Scotia Council and House of Assembly had described the lamentable state of education prevalent in English-speaking sections of the colony thus:

> ...barely the fourth part of the children of a rapidly increasing population are taught at all.... in most of the Settlements, some Families, and in a few places the whole number, are, from various causes, perfectly indifferent to the duty of instructing their offspring.[50]

Apparently many of these English-speaking areas lacked even the inadequate educational facilities available to the

Acadians. Nevertheless, these years witnessed a further decline in Acadian education. Abbé Sigogne, and other Roman Catholic priests had only prevented a more serious decline.

1841-1864

In 1841 the Nova Scotia government showed its concern for the extreme backwardness of education throughout the colony by introducing legislation that provided for a system of compulsory assessment, a Central Board of Education, and increased financial grants to the schools. In addition, Clause 14 of the complex piece of legislation stipulated that financial assistance would be extended to those schools where the language of instruction was French, Gaelic or German.[51] Undoubtedly it was hoped that Clause 14 might make "general assessment" more palatable to the politically important Acadian, Gaelic and German communities. However, it should be emphasized that before 1841 provincial financial assistance had been available to non-English schools. Clause 14 only placed existing practice on a legal basis.

Clause 14 was certainly not inserted as a result of Acadian pressure. During the long and bitter debate in the Assembly on the merits of the new educational policy, not a word was uttered regarding Clause 14.[52] Almost all of the debating time was spent discussing the implications of compulsory assessment. Eventually compulsory assessment was defeated, 33 to 12,[53] and in so doing the members

of the Assembly had removed the heart of the legislation.

On April 2, 1841, the Legislative Council began to debate Clause 14. An amendment was immediately introduced "to strike out the clause which gave to schools for education in French, German and Gaelic languages the same support as those for education in the English language."[54] The Councillors who supported the amendment were not necessarily anti-Acadian, or anti-German. These men simply wanted Nova Scotia to have a uniform and English educational system.

Only one member of the Council, its President, S.B. Robie, supported the principle of Clause 14. According to the Halifax Morning Post, Robie made:

> ...a stirring and eloquent appeal... insisting on the right of those portions of our population who did not speak the English language to a part of the provision made by the Legislature for the support of Education, and upon the injustice of depriving them, in their old age, when their eyes were dim, of the consolation of hearing the Bible read to them by their children. The learned President spoke with much feeling and enthusiastic eloquence, on the antiquity of the languages which the amendment would exclude and conjured the House not to drive them from the Country by such a Gothic proscription.[55]

Robie's "eloquence" fell on deaf ears for the amendment was carried.

The Council also amended other portions of the Educational Bill. The Council's policy precipitated a real

crisis. The Assembly refused to accept the Council's amendments and after threatening to apply financial pressure, the Assembly was finally able to persuade the Legislative Council to agree to the new legislation.[56]

After 1841 an increasing number of Acadians began to take advantage of governmental assistance for elementary education. Consequently, the Nova Scotia Government, largely through the Central Board of Education, began to play a more important role in Acadian education. This did not mean, however, that the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in the educational sphere decreased appreciably. The priests continued to dictate educational policy at the local level. Furthermore, in 1861 at Arichat, the Frères des Ecoles Chrétiennes, began to construct "une grande école."[57] They had been encouraged to come to Arichat by the Abbé Girouard, an Acadian priest. The brothers

> enseignaient à la fois l'anglais et le français mais accordaient une plus large place à la langue française. Les règlements scolaires de la province n'exigeant pas encore des instituteurs des diplômes officiels, ces frères donnaient leurs cours dans l'école publique et firent dans cette paroisse un bien immense au point de vue du français.[58]

Throughout the period from 1841 to 1864 the Nova Scotia educational authorities were extremely critical of the state of education in the Acadian areas. But the Acadians alone were not responsible for their educational backwardness. Text-books and library books sent to the

Acadian regions from Halifax were usually written in English. C.D. Randall, who inspected the Acadian schools in 1853, perceptively observed:

> It is quite evident that English works will be of no use in a community which reads only French, and therefore it would seem expedient that the inhabitants of Clare, and some other districts, should be supplied with different reading from what is furnished to the English portion of the population.... How far the condition of things in Clare relative to education is chargeable to their not having been better supplied with books, I leave others to determine. Certain it is that their schools are in a lamentably defective state; and, what is worse, the inhabitants do not appear to be as sensible as could be desired of the need of improvement.[59]

Nobody in Halifax listened to Randall's advice. For in 1855 it was reported from Clare that "no French books have been received for three or four years."[60]

J.W. Dawson, Superintendent of Education in Nova Scotia from 1850 to 1853, was especially critical of Acadian education. In 1850 he reported:

> I found no public school-house in Arichat.... Many settlements in this country are in a state of very great destitution in the matter of schools; the French population especially appear to be very much neglected in this respect... Argyle... I saw but 4 schools in operation [in the Acadian area] and only one of these could be considered an efficient school....Clare.... In

> some of the schools of this district the instruction is solely in the French language; in others, English is taught by teachers ignorant of French. Only a few teachers have knowledge of both languages.[61]

In 1851 Dawson saw a few signs of improvement. There was still very great destitution of education in Argyle and Clare, but there were now "a few really good teachers."[62] in the latter region. However, Dawson had nothing encouraging to say about Acadian education in 1852. "The state of education" in Argyle, he argued, "is very low, and the apathy of the people generally extreme."[63] Unfortunately his successor, the Reverend Alexander Forrester, who served as Superintendent of Education until 1864, was strangely silent concerning Acadian education.

In spite of Clause 14 of the Educational Act of 1841, the Nova Scotia educational authorities did everything in their power to ensure "that the blessings of a sound English training may be generally diffused."[64] They wished to see a homogeneous English educational system throughout the colony. The Acadian schools, where subjects were taught in French, were considered to be temporary nuisances. And many Acadians shared this view.

From 1604 to 1864, Acadian education had struggled from one crisis to another. But despite these crises and despite the "extreme apathy" of the Acadian

inhabitants, the educational flame first ignited by the Capuchins had continued to burn throughout the period. Without the Acadian Roman Catholic priests that flame would have been extinguished.

CHAPTER II

YEARS OF FRUSTRATION: 1864-1902

The Education Act of 1864 and its amendments of 1865 and 1866 established the basic framework for the public school system of Nova Scotia. Despite strong public and political pressure, the government of Nova Scotia, under the administration of Sir Charles Tupper, succeeded in passing the bills which set up a free public school system based on compulsory assessment of all the personal and real property of the citizens of Nova Scotia.[1] Moreover, the bills authorized the government, for the first time, to assume complete control of secondary education in the province and to integrate the academies and other superior schools into the general school system.[2] Finally, a Provincial Council of Instruction, with the Superintendent of Education as Secretary and Executive Officer, was created. The responsibilities of this Council of Public Instruction included the appointment of school inspectors for each county, the drawing up of regulations for the Provincial Normal School and regulations for the licensing of teachers. In addition, the Council, with the concurrence of the Superintendent of Education, was responsible for the development throughout the province of a uniform curriculum based upon standardized textbooks.[3]

It can be effectively argued that the Education

Acts of 1864, 1865 and 1866[4] were, in fact, a backward step for the cause of Acadian education in Nova Scotia. It should be remembered that according to Section 14 of the Education Act of 1841:

> That any School, wherein the ordinary language of instruction may be in French, Gaelic, or German language in any School District in this Province, shall be entitled to the like proportion of the public money as any school wherein the ordinary instruction may be in the English language.5

However, the Education Acts of 1864-66 proposed a standardized school system and curriculum, and the programme that was established by the Council of Public Instruction was to be taught exclusively in English. Indeed, the first published list of prescribed texts did not include even one French book or bilingual reader to help the students who had formerly received their instruction in French. Nor was French included as a part of the "secondary school" course of study.[6] In fact, it was not until 1867 that French was added to the "secondary school" list of subjects and even then it was made an optional course which could be replaced by study in either Latin, Greek, or German.[7]

Prior to 1864, teachers did not require a license although a provincial school of teacher education had been established in Truro as early as 1854. But the Education Act of 1865 required that all teachers be licensed either by passing a provincial examination or by graduating from

the Provincial Normal School at Truro. All instruction in the Normal School was in English and its courses emphasized English grammar and composition. The Provincial Licensing Examination which was authorized in 1865 did not actually start operation until 1867. At that time prospective teachers were tested on the following subjects: [9]

1. English grammar
2. English analysis
3. History of the English language
4. Prosody
5. Composition
6. Criticism
7. Latin
8. Greek
9. History & Geography
10. Mathematics
11. School management

Provincial examiners were also required to test the candidates' English reading ability before letting them take the test. Thus, the licensing examinations emphasized English proficiency for all teachers and provided no credit at all for candidates with a knowledge of French.

The Education Act of 1864 hurt Acadian education in yet another way. The school established by the Frères des Ecoles Chrétiennes at Arichat was forced to close its doors because there was not enough money to support it as well as a school for English-speaking students.[10]

Without question, the Education Act of 1864 was a severe blow to the Acadians of Nova Scotia. It made even more difficult their feeble efforts to maintain their language, culture and customs in the midst of an alien and

sometimes hostile majority. As the provisions of the Act were formally instituted and a standardized school system established, French schools were left outside of the legal structure of the public school system and English became the only recognized medium of instruction. This system did not come about by accident, but was the result of the deliberate policy of the Council of Public Instruction authorized under the 1864 Act.

In 1865, the Superintendent of Education, T.H. Rand, outlined the policy and programme to be established for the public schools:

> Our schools have too long been allowed the unlimited study of foreign text-books and authorities. Our children should not only be taught arithmetic, but the manifold applications of it as practiced in the British Provinces; our reading books should contain sentiments calculated to cultivate a spirit of true loyalty to our beloved sovereign, instead of the reverse, and our geographies should impart especial knowledge concerning the British provinces, and the Empire of which they form a part.[11]

Yet, despite the public and avowed policy of the Council of Public Instruction and the Superintendent of Education, the Acadians raised very few objections to the Act. One reason for their attitude may be found in the discussions and debates on the Free School Act, particularly as they related to Roman Catholics. Tupper's law (as

the Act of 1864 was popularly called) proposed to make the schools not only free but non-sectarian. Prior to 1864, the Roman Catholics of Nova Scotia, who represented approximately one-third of the population, were accustomed to going to schools largely controlled by their clergy. Thus the 1864 law represented a threat to church control of education, and Archbishop Connolly opposed it on behalf of the Roman Catholics of Nova Scotia.

However, Premier Tupper persuaded the Archbishop that the Council of Public Instruction, being a representative group, would always contain Roman Catholics, and that therefore Catholic interests would be safeguarded. The Archbishop then agreed to the new legislation but for the next few years the Roman Catholic clergy were mainly concerned with protecting the rights of their schools, especially in the city of Halifax.[12] Since before the time of Father Sigogne the Acadians had looked to the clergy for leadership. But at this time the Catholic hierarchy was more concerned with the general question of the legal status of parochial schools than with the particular needs of the Acadian people. And so, because the Acadians were strong and fervent Roman Catholics, and because the Church had accepted the 1864 law, they found themselves without leaders to organize a protest and without the support of the Roman Catholic hierarchy.

But there were other reasons for the prevailing mood

of Acadian apathy. The Acadians suffered from a very real sense of inferiority and they were not eager to start protests that would bring them into direct conflict with the English-speaking majority.[14] Finally, most Acadians, like many other Nova Scotians, were not particularly interested in education. School reports indicate that both French parents and English parents were apathetic about their children's education and that only approximately one out of four children who were eligible to go to school did, in fact, attend a school-house during this period.[15] The percentage of Acadian children attending school was approximately equal to the percentage of English-speaking children. The census of 1861 revealed that out of an entire population of 284,092 Nova Scotians over five years of age, 81,469 could not read a printed page and 114,877 could not write their own names.[16] With such conditions prevailing, it was evident that not only Acadians but Nova Scotians in general had only a passing interest in the cause of education.

Among other things, the British North America Act of 1867 established French as one of the two legal languages of Parliament. However, since education remained a provincial responsibility the legal status of Acadian education in Nova Scotia remained exactly as it had been in 1864. The special requirements of Acadian education were not destined to be formally acknowledged by the provincial government until 1902. But despite the fact that Acadian education was not officially recognized by the Nova Scotia government, French was ex-

tensively used in the schools in the Acadian areas of the province. Long before 1902 the educational authorities had been forced to abandon their attempt to have a uniform English system of education throughout the province. Certain concessions were made to the Acadians, but nevertheless, from 1864 to 1902 the exact status of the Acadian schools remained shadowy and undefined,and it is therefore not surprising that the schools often lagged behind their English counterparts. Nor is it surprising that there was usually a shortage of competent teachers for the Acadian schools. What is surprising is that French continued to be taught, that largely because of Acadian efforts the quality of teaching instruction did improve, and that Acadians established the tools, if not the content, for a culture and a heritage not like that of the English-speaking majority in Nova Scotia or the French in Quebec, but uniquely and simply their own. To understand how Acadian education developed it is necessary to examine this period in some

1864-1885 (detail.

Since their re-settlement in Nova Scotia after 1755, most Acadians had lived in areas quite remote from the English-speaking settlements. However, by 1864, a considerable number had left these regions for Halifax, Yarmouth and other centres. In general, those Acadians who moved to English-speaking areas found it virtually impossible to preserve their language and customs. These uprooted Acadians were usually assimilated within one or two generations. Thus, while there were Acadians living in most parts

of Nova Scotia, "French schools" existed only where the Acadians were a preponderant majority of the population.[17] Therefore almost all of the Acadian schools were located in the traditionally French-speaking regions of Nova Scotia - in the southwest corner (Clare - Argyle) and in the south and western portions of Cape Breton.

After 1864 the teachers in these regions continued to teach in French and to use French textbooks when they could be obtained. To have done anything else would have led to complete havoc since most of the pupils and not a few teachers were unfamiliar with the English language. In 1869 the Inspector for Digby County, A.W. Savory, recognized this situation in his report when he asked that the French texts used in the Acadian Schools be subsidized in the same manner that English texts were being subsidized.[18] Inspector Savory felt that it was only fair to offer the Acadians equal privileges with the English-speaking Nova Scotians and in one way the Council of Public Instruction must have agreed with him, for in 1871 the Council of Public Instruction abolished the half subsidy for English books![19]

As early as 1866, the Reverend P.J. Filleul, Inspector for Digby County, pleaded not only for subsidized and authorized French books but also for recognition of the Acadian system of schooling. In his report addressed to the Superintendent of Education he observed:

> Some English is taught in nearly all the schools in Clare, but the people are naturally unwilling to forego having the children instructed in the language of their forefathers, and prefer teachers of their own to all others. I am aware that the disadvantages under which this interesting people labour are not unknown to you, and, from the anxiety you manifest to supply schools with the best books, we are induced to believe that the people of Clare will soon be admitted to the privileges that are enjoyed by their English brethren.[20]

The Superintendent of Education, Theodore Rand, answered this statement thus:

> The Honorable Mr. Chaveau, Supt. of Education for Lower Canada, has for some time been preparing a series of French Reading Books for the schools of that Province. It is hoped that suitable Elementary Readers may be selected from these, when published, for the schools above referred to.[21]

In succeeding years the inspectors for Digby, Clare and Yarmouth emphasized the need for authorized French texts.[22] However, despite their pleas and the promise of the Superintendent of Education, no Acadian texts were prescribed for use in Nova Scotian schools until 1882, when the bilingual series of Royal Readers was introduced by the Council of Public Instruction.[23]

The inspectors for the southwestern school dis-districts in Nova Scotia seemed genuinely interested in the special problems of the Acadian schools. But the inspectors

for the Cape Breton region did not share their interest and from 1864 to 1902 the development of Acadian schools in Cape Breton was largely ignored in their official education reports.[24] Until 1879 Clare was considered a separate school district and the inspector for that region tended to act as the spokesman and lobbyist for the Acadian education interests.[25] But after that date school districts were consolidated and whether by accident or design each Acadian area in the southwest was paired with an English-speaking area and so Digby joined with Annapolis and Yarmouth with Shelburne. And consequently, as a result, the particular importance of Acadians in each school district was greatly lessened.[26]

The main problem for the Acadian schools was the poor quality of the teachers. Of course they shared this problem with English-speaking schools, for throughout this period inspectors from all districts commented on the poor quality of instruction and lack of trained teachers.[27] Low salaries and qualifying examinations with extremely low standards left the teaching field open to students who could pass 25% or 30% of the provincial examinations, who were 18 years old, or who had passed Grade IX. But the French teachers were particularly handicapped because they were compelled to teach a basically English curriculum from English texts and yet the only way they could make those texts intelligible to the vast majority of their students

was by explaining and discussing them in French. Thus a competent Acadian teacher should have been fluent in both English and French, and yet many of them were incompetent in both languages and the reasons for this were obvious. They were a product of their own schooling; they had very little access to French grammar books andwere usually taught English by Acadians who were unfamiliar with the structure of that language. Until 1879 no Acadian high school existed in the Clare region of Digby County and when that high school was established at Belliveau's Cove it consisted of only one English and one French teacher.[28]

The general practice of one-room school-houses for rural districts was particularly detrimental in the Acadian areas. According to the inspectors' reports, the Acadians tended to send their children to school very young, at about the age of five, and to withdraw them by the age of twelve. The average school thus usually consisted of a very crowded primary room and an almost deserted school-house for higher grades.[29] Thus the Acadian teacher in a one-room school-house or primary room had to instruct children in seven different grades, and two languages, without the aid of suitable texts which could occupy the attention of the children. In Digby County in 1867, forty-eight teachers were responsible for teaching 2,807 pupils in forty-five different schools.[30] Under such conditions it would have been difficult enough to produce good English students and prospective teachers (and the reports of the inspectors indicate that the level of

scholarship was generally low), and it was almost impossible to produce French-speaking scholars and teachers. In his report on the school year of 1879/80, the Inspector for Digby and Annapolis described graphically this situation:

> The school accommodation in most sections is sufficient to meet the requirements of the law. The greater part of the deficiency in this respect is in the Municipality of Clare, among the Acadian French population. Several sections in this part of my district, each having from 90 to 130 children between the ages of 5 and 15 years, are provided with school-houses containing one large school-room only, with one medium sized class-room adjoining....
>
> In these schools many of the younger pupils cannot understand English, in consequence of which English teachers, unless thoroughly conversant with the French language, cannot be employed. The difficulty with which French applicants for license have to contend in passing the required examination is very great. Their thoughts are naturally conceived in their vernacular language and then translated into English if required, in consequence of which and of the short time allowed at the examination, they are placed at a disadvantage....
>
> There are now in my district 12 or 13 French teachers to supply 22 French schools....the progress made by pupils in attendance at school has been generally satisfactory considering the irregularity of attendance of the pupils....The French schools are, as a rule, not so far advanced as those in the English sections. The principal cause of this is not any lack of ability on the part of teachers or pupils, but is owing chiefly to the fact that teachers and taught are compelled to impart and receive instruction in two distinct languages.31

Aside from the problems outlined in the inspector's report some other items should be noted. First, and most obvious, the inspector and the school authorities had obviously accepted the principle of French teachers for French regions, although this principle was not part of any school legislation and contradicted the early school requirements made under the Free School Act. And second, the inspector criticized not only French teaching, but bilingual teaching, and emphasized the difficulty of teaching two languages in the primary grades. This criticism was to be voiced more and more often and would receive recognition in one of the recommendations of the Acadian Commission of 1902.

During the period from 1864 to 1885 the Acadians remained politically inactive and the record of the debates of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly contains no petition for recognition of their rights to a separate school system.[32] But socially and culturally the Acadians began to develop an organization which though church-oriented was not church-controlled and which would ultimately become an important influence on the course of Acadian education.

In 1880 Acadian representatives from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were invited to join La Société Saint-Jean Baptiste at its general convention in Quebec. They did so and thus became the first Acadian representatives to convene anywhere. At this meeting they decided to call a general convention of Acadians at Memramcook in New Brunswick for the

following year. This one act sparked a long dormant desire for a national Acadian association, and in 1881, in Memramcook, Acadian representatives chose a national feast day and adopted a patron saint which was not that of the French Canadians. In 1883, a second convention met at Tignish in Prince Edward Island, and selected an Acadian flag and a national anthem.[33] "Thus the Acadians proclaimed in no uncertain terms that they considered themselves a cultural group, distinct from all others in the land, and expressed their determination to remain so and furthermore to maintain and develop all the cultural values which were peculiar to their group."[34]

By 1885 French teachers and texts were accepted, in fact though not in law, by the provincial educational authorities. Moreover, a national Acadian society had been founded and declared its intention of preserving Acadian culture and the French language through which it was expressed. This society provided a means for establishing communication and training leaders both within and without the church and was thus another source of support for the Acadian communities that were striving to retain their language and customs.

But on the negative side it must be noted that Acadian children were not receiving proper instruction in either English or French and that no serious attempt had been made to alter this situation by the Acadians or by the provincial educational authorities. The Superintendent of

Education and the Council of Public Instruction remained committed to the idea of English instruction. In 1872, the Superintendent of Education stated that:

> English grammar, history, geography, arithmetic, geometry, practical mathematics, reading and penmanship, are branches which are taught and receive particular attention in all our common schools. If a pupil is well grounded in these he is furnished with appliances through which, with integrity and persevering industry, life will be no failure, with these requisitions our young men, wherever their lot may be cast, need not want but a fair field to secure fortune to themselves and honor to their native Province.[35]

And the Superintendent did not change his point of view. He just yielded to the inevitable and allowed French texts and French-speaking teachers as a device to be used until the pupils could become thoroughly acquainted with English. Thus by 1885 the Acadians controlled the personnel in the school, but the authorities in Halifax planned school programmes and teachers' examinations for one distinct aim - an increased competency in the English language.

1885 - 1902

The period from 1885 to 1902 was one of increased activity on the part of the Acadians especially in the field of education. For the first time Acadians began to plan actively a programme of French instruction. At the third convention of the Acadians in 1890, the decision was made to found a college for French-speaking students. This college

St. Anne's, was founded that same year at Church Point in Digby County and was staffed by priests of the Eudist Order.[36] Three years later, in 1893, an act was introduced into the House of Assembly by Ambrose H. Comeau, an Acadian from Digby County, incorporating the college and giving it the right to grant degrees.[37]

In 1895 Clare Academy became the first really Acadian secondary school in existence. Most of the instruction was in French and the classes were held in the college class-rooms at Ste. Anne's. College teachers supplemented the high school staff and taught Greek and Latin, but unfortunately they did not provide any instruction in French grammar or composition.[38] And the basic problem of poor teachers and inadequate texts remained. Bilingual Royal Readers were authorized by the Council of Public Instruction in 1882 but these books only went up to the fifth grade, after which only English texts were supposed to be used. Moreover, the Royal Readers were composed with a French text on one side of the page and an English translation of it on the other. These books were severely criticized by the inspector of Acadian schools in Digby and Yarmouth, in his first report when he attempted to explain:

> ...the necessity of learning a foreign tongue through the medium of the vernacular. The Council of Public Instruction has admitted the truth and justice of this principle, in placing French books in the hands of our Acadian children, but the form of these books I find very disastrous to that individual labor so necessary on the part of a

> pupil. I refer to those books with French on one page and English translation on the other....
>
> I found in the majority of cases in all sixty-five schools I visited, that the children were unable to explain their lesson in French without the aid of the translation at hand. This is due to too much dependence being placed upon the present form of readers.[39]

In 1897 the French reader, Les Inventiones Modernes was added to the prescribed list of French texts for the common schools. The Special Visitor felt that it was also a poor choice.

> The French reader "Les Inventiones Modernes" is much too difficult for our schools. I have not found one scholar in this whole district who would attempt to translate it. Of itself, the book is too far advanced for many of our teachers (according to their own avowal) as it contains so many technical terms appertaining to the study of physics and applied inorganic chemistry, which, to be properly understood, presupposes a knowledge of these sciences. Part II of the Third Royal Reader is also too difficult both in French and English for the Fourth Grade.[40]

By 1895 some English-speaking Nova Scotians appeared to be showing some sympathy with, and concern for, the plight of Acadian education. In October 1895 the twelfth convention of the Provincial Education Association passed the following resolution:

> Resolved that in the opinion of this Educational Convention it would seem desirable that the Council of Public Instruction for this Province should allow such change to be effected in the books in use in schools in French-speaking districts would give to pupils in said schools text-books in their own language, at least in Reading and Grammar, in order to facilitate their acquiring a knowledge of English.[41]

However, it is important to note that the interest in Acadian schools by these English-speaking Nova Scotians centred on the problem of teaching the pupils in English, and not on the subject of teaching them their own language. This view was emphasized once again in 1896 with the publication of new Acadian School regulations:

> In common school grades, French grammar, when taught, should be taught orally, the pupils not being required to have a text-book. A Reader to follow No. 3 (bilingual) is under consideration. This study of French should in no case interfere with due attention to all the other subjects of the Provincial Course of Study.[42]

But, for whatever reason, the agitation for new readers went on. In 1900, at a meeting of the French Teachers' Institute at Church Point, Ambrose Comeau, a guest speaker, spoke regarding the necessity of having a new series of readers for the French course and at the same Institute a resolution condemning the text Les Inventiones Modernes was unanimously passed.[43] In part this desire for change may have been a reflection of the active demand on

the part of English-speaking Nova Scotian teachers for new readers (the English readers had not been changed since 1877)[44] but in any case it represented a vigorous and concerted demand by Acadian leaders for a change in the school laws affecting their people. Moreover, this demand also represented the first positive public reaction to government intervention in the life of the Acadians.

During most of the period from 1885 to 1902 qualified French teachers were in short supply and often unlicensed teachers were given "permissive" licenses so that a sufficient supply of French-speaking teachers could be secured. After the opening of Clare Academy there was hope that enough qualified applicants would be available to fill the schools, but because Clare Academy held its classes at Ste. Anne's and the rules of the Eudist fathers forbade girls in the classroom, very few of its pupils became French teachers.[45] Salaries were simply too poor to attract qualified males to the teaching profession. Female predominance and poor salaries were true of all school sections in Nova Scotia and remained so even after 1902. In 1904, Mr. McKenzie, the member for Cape Breton, questioned "the logic of making the examinations for teachers so difficult when the prize was of so little value."[46]

After 1897 Acadian girls began to receive instruction in high school courses from the nuns in the Convent at Church Point and the supply of teachers slowly improved.[47] Still, by 1900 the scarcity of French teachers forced the

inspector to suspend the operation of School Regulations requiring the principal of a graded school to hold a Grade B (equivalent to Grade XI in high school) or Grade C (equivalent to Grade X) license. Principals were then appointed to five Acadian graded schools who held only a Grade D (equal to Grade IX) license.[48]

Obviously the major difficulty in securing teachers was the fact that very few of them had received adequate instruction in either French or English. But another reason undoubtedly was the nature of the provincial examinations. In 1896, the pass requirements for teachers who did not go to the Normal School were raised to a minimum mark of 30 on an imperative subject (French was not imperative, but optional) but an average of at least 50% was required in all the English papers, in addition to the aggregate minimum total of 400 points. The English papers stressed grammar and composition, and if inspectors' reports are to be believed, English was poorly taught throughout the province and especially in the Acadian schools.[49]

For those students wishing a better knowledge of French, few texts beyond the prescribed readers were available. The Council of Public Instruction was charged with the responsibility of promoting school libraries, and from time to time it issued lists of recommended books which would qualify the school library for a grant. In 1903 a complete recommended reading list was published. Although the list

comprised almost 450 titles, not one book was in French. Indeed, only one book was about Nova Scotian history and Longfellow's Evangeline was not on the recommended list. What was recommended was light fiction, famous English novels, and children's nature stories.[50]

As would be expected, no place was made in the school curriculum for anything peculiarly Acadian. English songs were the school songs and English holidays were the only ones officially celebrated. Perhaps because of their genuine desire to please their English neighbours and to live at peace with them, Acadian schools celebrated Empire Day with unusual fervor and it was reported that the favourite song of the children was "Soldiers of the Queen".[51] History texts emphasized the growth of the Empire and the evolution of British North America. The Visitor stated that the total lack of interest in history might be cured if the teaching could relate to events closer to their own time and place.[52]

Under these circumstances one must ask the question, were the Acadians preserving their culture? True they had preserved their language of instruction, but for what use? Surely the content of instruction is at least as important as the medium through which it is communicated. But Acadian children were reading French translations of English stories in their readers, were singing English songs, memorizing English history, celebrating English holidays. What "culture" were the children inheriting and studying? Some writers

contend that it was the "culture" of the Roman Catholic Church and the claim has often been made that Acadians who lost their language lost their religion.[53] But surely religious belief is not simply a function of language, nor does disbelief automatically appear with a knowledge of English.

Perhaps, then, the culture transmitted was the family history, legends, and so on. Such a culture probably did exist, perhaps in the form of an oral folk tradition. But was it necessary to agitate for schools to preserve this kind of a tradition which existed outside of and beyond the usual realm of the school?

Perhaps just the sense of being different and isolated was enough to convince the Acadian that he must protect his way of life and his language. History has often shown that a great defeat tends to strengthen a people's national consciousness. At any rate the period from 1885 to 1902 was one of great activity for the Acadians. Ste. Anne's College and Clare Academy were founded. A French Teachers' Institute began meeting in 1900; Acadian representatives such as Ambrose Comeau and Willy Comeau were becoming active in politics and the hostility or indifference of the English majority seemed to be fading. In 1900 the Superintendent of Schools addressed the French Institute and urged the members to ground themselves fully in the beauties and intricacies of the French language[54] and in 1900 the Provincial Normal School began a course in French Instruction for teachers who

already had a knowledge of the language.[55] Thus, by 1902 the atmosphere both among the Acadians and the English-speaking Nova Scotians was favourable to change.

In 1902 a committee assembled by Ambrose Comeau, the representative of Digby County in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, studied the entire Acadian School System and recommended some serious changes. The recommendations were reviewed and accepted by the Council of Public Instruction and became effective in the academic year 1902/03. The recommendations of the Acadian Commission are considered as important for Acadian Schools as the Free School Act was for English schools. For this reason it is very important to understand just what were the accomplishments of the 1902 Commission.

The most obvious and immediate result of the Commission's findings was that Acadian schools became legal and as such attained a firmer position within the structure of the provincial educational system. Moreover the Commission sought to rationalize the bilingual programme through the following recommendations:

1. The teaching of all ordinary subjects in French for the first four years.
2. The oral teaching of English for the first four years, after which it was to become the sole language of instruction.
3. The preparation of a new series of French readers for the first four years.
4. A bilingual course offered at the Provincial Normal School during the summer.
5. The establishment of the office of an Inspector for Acadian Schools, to be known as the Acadian Visitor.[56]

The first recommendation made French the legal language of instruction for the first four grades. This recommendation only legalized the instruction already taking place in the schools since all inspectors' reports on the Acadian schools emphasized the use and absolute necessity for the vernacular (French) as the language of instruction.[57]

But the second recommendation was probably a step backward, and moreover was totally illogical. In Acadian schools French had tacitly been accepted as the language of instruction. This ruling would have limited it to the first four years. Thus the amount of French instruction would be decreased, not increased, by the 1902 rules. Furthermore, it was obvious that students who had received all their instruction in French for the first four years of schooling would not find it possible to switch suddenly to a totally English course. Then, too, the new ruling would in effect limit the Acadian to four years of French, then four years totally devoid of the language, and then a return to it as an optional foreign language in high school. If followed, this recommendation would have created chaos for the Acadian schools.

The third recommendation - for a new series of readers, was heartily welcomed by everyone. Unfortunately these readers were not distributed until 1907, at a time when pressure from English and Acadian educators became so intense that it could no longer be ignored. Even so, the English received their new readers in 1906 and the Acadians had to

wait until 1907.

The summer bilingual school at Truro was an innovation but was perhaps not too fortunate a change. A course in French instruction had been initiated during the regular school term at the Provincial Normal School in 1900. This course could be counted for credit towards a teacher's license.[59] When the bilingual summer school course was initiated the regular French course was dropped from the curriculum. But the bilingual summer course provided no credit towards a license and occupied almost all of the teacher's vacation. After 1907 bilingual teachers were allowed an extra week of vacation if they attended the course, but this improvement only meant that teachers had to sacrifice only five weeks of vacation instead of six in order to take a course which offered no advancement toward a higher license or a bigger salary.[60]

The Inspector of Acadian Schools only continued the practice begun in 1898 of appointing a special inspector for the French schools in Digby and Yarmouth. Indeed, the same man was appointed and so there was no break in the period of his inspectorship for French schools. This inspector, the Reverend J.J. Sullivan, was sympathetic to the Acadian cause and was instrumental in organizing the French Teachers' Institute.[61] But he spoke French poorly,[62] and because of other duties could not undertake the inspection of Acadian schools in Cape Breton and the Antigonish region. Thus these schools continued to provide a completely inadequate educational programme for the unfortunate Acadian

students.

The Council of Public Instruction accepted these recommendations not because it sought to promote the French language and the Acadian heritage, but because it believed that this was the best way to develop the knowledge of English it thought essential for all Nova Scotian students. Thus, in 1906 the Principal of the Provincial Normal School outlined the methods used in the bilingual class and then concluded:

> The aim of the course is, primarily, to impart effective methods of language-teaching in schools of French-speaking communities and to encourage the use of spoken English in all grades of these schools.[63]

How well the schools had succeeded is shown by the fact that the Normal School was unable in 1904 to locate eight Acadian students in all of Nova Scotia who did not understand at least some English[64] and Inspector Sullivan, in 1903, defended the Commission from the charge that it sought to perpetuate French to the detriment of English by repeating the often-used Acadian explanation that they were proceeding from the "known" to the "unknown".[65] Thus, only by a thorough grounding in French (the known) could pupils proceed to a knowledge of English (the unknown).

And so, for its most important recommendations, the Committee simply legalized what already was practiced, and in one area (recommendation No.2) it actually cut back on French instruction. Nothing was said regarding what, in

fact, constituted an Acadian school. The most tangible results of the Commission's recommmndations, a new set of readers, did not actually appear until some five years later and thus there was very little difference in the condition of Acadian schools before or immediately after the Commission's recommendations were acted upon. As a result of this lack of action, many Acadians became discouraged and the excitement over education died for many years. Excitement probably is too strong a word for this movement anyway, for it was so quiet, so well contained, that it caused hardly a ripple on the surface of the average English-speaking Nova Scotian's consciousness. No remarks were made about the Commission in the Halifax newspapers,[66] nor was there any comment on it in the Legislature aside from Premier Murray's short announcement that the government had decided to accept the Commission's recommendations.[67] No comment was made in the Educational Review, the leading Maritime educational magazine,[68] and it was not until 1908 that the Journal of Education, the official publication of the Nova Scotia Department of Education, published the Acadian regulations.[69]

CHAPTER III

Years Of Hope:

1902-1939

It has been shown that the recommendations of the Acadian Commission of 1902 did not in themselves result in an immediate profound change in either the methods or content of Acadian teaching in the province. Nevertheless, some Acadian leaders hoped that these recommendations could be used as a base upon which to build slowly and carefully a distinctive Acadian educational system. Instead, however, the official concessions granted in 1902 were gradually eroded away. By the middle of the 1930's the dream of a distinctive and viable Acadian educational system was probably no nearer realization than it had been at the beginning of the century.

Undoubtedly well-trained teachers are the first requirement for any good educational system. After 1902, the special six-week summer course for bilingual teachers was organized at the Provincial Normal College. Despite the major disadvantage that the course could not be used for credit, Acadian teachers were rather enthusiastic about it at first and attendance rose from a low of eight in 1903 to a high of nineteen students in 1910.[1] However, it soon became apparent that the main purpose of the course was simply to train bilingual teachers in the proper methods of

[2]

English language instruction. The Nova Scotia Manual of School Law described the purpose of the course in the following manner:

> A bilingual course of a few weeks shall be given free each year during vacation time in the Provincial Normal College at Truro, to French-speaking teachers to prepare them to teach English colloquially to French pupils coming to school without a knowledge of English; in order that by the time the pupils have completed the first four grades of the public school program, all work of instruction can be carried on effectively thereafter in English. Travelling expenses to and from this course shall be paid at the rate of five cents per mile.[3]

Thus the training course at Truro can be considered to be bilingual only in the sense that it sought to improve the English comprehension of the French-speaking Acadians. Although a little time was spent on the methods of teaching French, the entire emphasis of the programme was on French as a foreign language. French was not to be taught as the mother-tongue or even as a second but co-equal language. Therefore the Berlitz method was employed, even though this system was primarily designed to teach a quick but superficial acquaintance with a second language.

Not only was the method of language instruction unsuitable but the content of the Truro course was almost totally meaningless for the Acadian student-teachers. There were numerous colloquial English phrases and pointless English sentences to be learned. No attempt was made to find texts that dealt with Acadian history or cul-

ture. The student-teacher who enrolled for the course may possibly have enlarged his French or English vocabulary but there was nothing in the programme to make it especially Acadian. One Acadian who remembered the Truro programme described it thus:

> Le professeur désignait par leurs noms anglais quelques objets trouvés dans la classe, en phrases courtes, simples. Il posait ensuite une question facile en anglais pour obtenir comme réponse, la premiere phrase énoncée. Le professeur passait alors à l'écriture au tableau, puis à la lecture orale des phrases ou groupes de phrases.[4]

From a practical point of view, the summer course offered no advantages to the Acadian teachers. It offered no course credit and it was never made a required programme for bilingual teachers. Moreover, Acadian teachers were not even guaranteed that their travelling expenses to and from Truro would be paid unless they could show that they were able to speak both languages "with fair fluency".[5]

Under these conditions, it is not surprising that enthusiasm for the course declined considerably, as did enrollment. In 1914 not enough students applied and consequently the course was discontinued.[6] In 1921 the Truro Normal School attempted to revive this course but to no avail. As one Acadian teacher exclaimed, "Pourquoi en effet se rendre à Truro apprendre comment enseigner l'Anglais?"[8]

The Council of Public Instruction had also

accepted the recommendation of the Acadian Commission that all subjects in Grades I to IV, other than English, should be taught in French in the Acadian areas. But it was impossible to implement such a program since the only authorized French texts were readers for each of the Grades from I to IV. Spelling, grammar, arithmetic and other subjects could only be studied from English texts.[9] Even if the Acadian teacher was eager to instruct in French no teaching guides or handbooks were authorized for him. Since almost all Acadian classrooms were ungraded and usually overcrowded, the teacher confronted the perplexing problem of translating English texts into French for the first four years while being officially compelled to use nothing but English for all grades beyond Grade IV. In 1912 the Journal of Education clarified the government's attitude towards French readers to be used in Acadian schools:

> The new French readers cannot be legally used in Acadian schools if the teachers are not able to teach English effectively in colloquial fashion.[10]

The restriction in usage was further amplified in the Manual of School Law for 1921:

> In schools where a large number of pupils attend who cannot understand English, the trustees are authorized to allow the use of the prescribed French Readers for such pupils, provided the teacher is capable of giving colloquial instruction in English as specified in the foregoing regulation and in giving it so effectively that by the end of the fourth year the pupils can henceforward be effectively instructed through the medium of the English language. But no language except English shall be imperative on any pupil.[11]

Thus it became increasingly obvious that the Nova Scotia educational authorities were not interested in the development of a viable bilingual school system in the Acadian areas. Rather like their predecessors in 1864 and earlier, they wished to see Nova Scotia with a uniform and English educational system. Moreover, since no pupil could be compelled to learn French, the objection of one parent could force the instructor either to allot a disproportionate amount of time for the individual instruction of the English-speaking student or else to compel the teacher to teach the entire class in English.[12]

But with or without the clarifying regulations of 1911 and 1921, it soon became evident that the 1902 regulations, if complied with, would ultimately force Acadian teachers to spend most of their time instructing in English. Since students were supposed to be taught only in the English language from Grade V on, it was essential that Acadian schools should prepare the students for the sudden switch to another language. This was especially the case since almost no English was to be heard elsewhere in the various Acadian communities.[13] What the 1902 regulations did, in effect, was to set a time limit for Acadian students to learn English and the allotted time was unreasonably short.

The Acadian Commission had also suggested that only Acadian teachers be employed in the bilingual schools.[14] In general, this policy was followed. Of course this suggestion

had not been a startling innovation. It had merely recognized a practice already prevalent in the Acadian areas. Very few non-Acadian Nova Scotians were competent in French and it would have been almost impossible to teach the Acadian children, whose only language was French, without some considerable knowledge of their mother tongue. As a rule, English-speaking Nova Scotians were not capable of the task. Even the Superintendent of Education for the province, Dr. Mackay, was compelled to admit his ignorance of French. In 1913 he addressed a meeting of the Acadian Teachers' Institute and "He declared his regret at being unable to risk addressing the audience in the language of France".[15]

After the appointment of Inspector L. A. d'Entremont as Acadian Visitor in 1908 a much greater effort was made to develop and inspect the Acadian schools in the areas outside Clare and Argyle. However, the great distances to be covered proved too much for Inspector d'Entremont who was eventually forced to concentrate, as his predecessor had done, on the Argyle and Clare areas.[16]

In 1925 Inspector d'Entremont was appointed Inspector of Schools for Richmond and Inverness South in Cape Breton.[17] While this region contained a large number of Acadians and Inspector d'Entremont could be expected to interest himself in their many perplexing educational problems, he was no longer a special inspector of Acadian schools.

He was responsible for all of the schools in the region. Since no one was appointed to fill the post that Inspector d'Entremont had vacated until late in 1926, there was no Acadian Visitor for almost two years. Then in 1926 the territorial responsibilities of the various school inspectors were significantly changed. The municipal divisions of Clare and Argyle were extracted from the supervision of the inspectors for Digby and Yarmouth and made into a new inspectorial division. All other Acadian students (in effect, all those in Cape Breton) were to be supervised by the Inspector for Richmond and Inverness. In 1927 Inspector d'Entremont returned to the Acadians of southwestern Nova Scotia as Inspector for Clare and Argyle and J. A. Benoit replaced him as Inspector for Inverness and Richmond.[18]

This division of responsibility should have strengthened the position of the Acadian schools but its actual effect was a return to the situation prevailing prior to 1925. Inspector d'Entremont immersed himself in the problems of the Acadians of Clare and Argyle but Inspector Benoit, burdened by the duties of his huge inspectorate, was seldom able to devote any time and energy to the problems of Acadian education. Although Inspector Benoit was appointed in 1927 he did not mention Acadian education in any significant way in his annual reports until 1937, when he was appointed Inspector of Bilingual Schools for Eastern Nova Scotia.[19]

The office of Acadian Visitor was abolished in 1926. Although inspectors for Acadian schools continued to have a special responsibility as far as the Nova Scotia government was concerned, their inspectorates were officially linked to geographical areas. In practice, the system of inspection for bilingual schools remained virtually unchanged after 1926. But nevertheless, 1926 appeared to spell the end of the period when any public official carried the word Acadian in his official title.

Some Acadian leaders were quick to realize that the 1902 regulations could never preserve their language and their culture and that they had not been proclaimed for this purpose. From 1910 on, an almost continuous series of meetings and institutes called for a drastic revision of the programme of studies.[20]

In 1912 the first Acadian Bishop was appointed in the Maritime region; he was the Bishop of the diocese of Saint John, New Brunswick.[21] Although this appointment was in another province, it was very important for the cause of Acadian education in Nova Scotia. It meant that Acadians in the Maritime Provinces would be encouraged to apply more pressure to wrest control over Acadian regions from Irish bishops. Since the Roman Catholic Church provided almost all of the teachers for the Acadians, this appointment indicated that there would be increased support from the hierarchy for a truly Acadian educational system. The ap-

pointment also showed that the Church was aware of and was encouraging the growing national consciousness of the Acadians.

In 1913 there was a meeting of the French Institute of the bilingual teachers of Yarmouth and Digby Counties. Dissatisfaction with the 1902 regulations was soon vociferously expressed and a heated discussion of the regulations occupied the entire programme of the meeting. Resolutions were passed and a petition was sent to the Council of Public Instruction of Nova Scotia asking that bilingual teachers be given a special examination in French to replace the solely English examination that they were now compelled to take. The French Institute also asked that a grammar written in French be prescribed for the Acadian schools.[22] Although Dr. Mackay, the Superintendent of Education, had attended this meeting and had expressed his approval of the bilingual programme, the petition of the French Institute was quietly shelved and there was never any official reaction to it. Official indifference was to be the response to many other Acadian petitions.

In 1922 a meeting was arranged by prominent Acadian leaders such as the respected Liberal politician, Willie Comeau, Abbé Mombourquette of Arichat, and Inspector d'Entremont. At this meeting the Acadians endeavoured to formulate a new programme for their schools. But at the same time Acadians in New Brunswick were seeking broader

ducational and language rights and the Nova Scotia Acadians did not want to damage their own work by having it associated in the public mind with the disturbances in New Brunswick. The Nova Scotia Acadians therefore decided to work behind the scenes through political and social contacts to achieve their desired goals.[23]

Despite various meetings held from 1922 to 1928 and despite political pressure, nothing really changed as far as Acadian education was concerned during this period. In 1928, Mr. M. Latour, Inspector of Separate Schools in Ottawa, visited Nova Scotia. He organized a large meeting at St. Anne's College at Church Point to discuss the question of Acadian schools. At this meeting a committee was appointed to draft a new programme for the Acadian schools. This programme was presented to the Council of Public Instruction in September 1930[24] and in September 1930 it appeared that significant changes might take place. The Superintendent of Education named a committee consisting of Inspectors d'Entremont and Benoit, J. Edouard Comeau, the instructor of French at the Normal School, and two English-speaking Nova Scotians to study the proposals that had been submitted.[25] Discussions commenced, but action did not. Since the entire public school curriculum was being revised, some justification for the delay was possible on the ground that the programme for the majority of students had to be completed first. By 1933 the curriculum revision for English-speaking students was completed.[26]

But 1933 witnessed no changes in the inadequate 1902 regulations. Acadians met and signed petitions; they debated their school problems. Confronted by official indifference, they often decided to ignore the regulations and often they continued to use French beyond Grade IV. They recognized that a system that authorized French instruction for Grades I to IV, forbade it for Grades V to VIII, and then permitted it to begin anew in the next grade, provided that it was taught as a foreign language, was clearly both absurd and unworkable.[27]

By 1937 most prominent Acadians had declared their opposition to the existing bilingual educational system.[28] In that year, the National Congress of the Société de l'Assomption was held at Memramcook in New Brunswick. The Commission of Education of the Congress appointed the Reverend Jules Comeau, Principal of Ste. Anne's College, Inspector d'Entremont and Professor Willie Belleveau of Ste. Anne's College to study the possibilities for promoting the advanced teaching of French among Nova Scotian Acadians. This group revived the proposals submitted in 1930 and prepared a list of suitable texts to be used for the proposed Acadian programme of studies. Their tactics were the same as in 1930; once again they decided to rely upon the behind-the-scenes political manoeuvering of their prominent provincial political leader, the Honourable Willie Comeau.[29] This time, however, they were successful.

In 1939 the Department of Education published a new programme of studies for Acadian schools. The programme consisted of three main points:

> 1. The 1902 regulations did not continue French instruction long enough to enable Acadian pupils to master their mother-tongue. And the prescribed use of English after Grade IV made it virtually impossible for the French-speaking pupils to master either language adequately. To remedy the situation, all the regular school subjects in Grades I to VI inclusive were to be taught in French with the following exceptions:
>
> A. Arithmetic in Grades IV to VI would be taught in English.
>
> B. Approximately 10% of the school recitation in Grades I to VI would be given to instruction in written and spoken English.
>
> 2. In Grades VII to IX instruction in language and literature would be given in both French and English. Furthermore, the textbooks in history would be in French and other textbooks would be in English. Teachers, however, might instruct in either language.
>
> 3. In Grades X to XII the prescribed subjects and textbooks would be the same as those prescribed for English-speaking students.[30]

Since these regulations were almost identical to those requested by Acadian education leaders in the 1920's and early 1930's it may be assumed that the Acadians had scored a notable victory. Perhaps they had, but the question must be asked: Why had it taken them so long to do so? Many Acadians have offered only one answer to this question. They have argued that the long delay was simply the natural result of the hostility of English-speaking Protestant Nova

Scotians to French Roman Catholicism. For both the Acadians and most Protestants the Roman Catholic religion was inextricably interwoven into the fabric of the Acadian language and educational system. The Reverend L. F. d'Entremont, the present principal of Ste. Anne's College, believes that Father Sigogne's greatness was that he recognized the Acadians for what they were - French and Roman Catholic: "When a nation believes no longer in the (religious) values for which their ancestors made tremendous sacrifices, it is near its death."[31] Some Acadians went so far as to blame the long delay on the machinations of the anti-Catholic Orange Order within the Council of Public Instruction, and one prominent Acadian leader has written that the Superintendent of Education promised new French texts in 1930 provided they were not too Roman Catholic in emphasis.[32]

However, it would be grossly inaccurate to explain the delay solely by using the anti-Roman Catholic argument. After all, English-speaking Roman Catholics in Nova Scotia had not been confronted by extraordinary opposition in the field of education from either the Protestant public or from the Nova Scotia government. Moreover, Nova Scotian law permitted each community to determine the moral and religious teaching in the local schools.[33] Largely because English-speaking Roman Catholic Nova Scotians have encountered

so few real problems in providing their children with "proper Roman Catholic education", one of their number has maintained that:

> ...for the past half century the relations between Church and State in the sphere of education in Nova Scotia have been remarkably free from contention.[34]

If religion, then, was not the major reason for the delay in changes in the field of Acadian education, certainly the issue of the French language probably was. Unquestionably a second language challenged the dominance of the English-oriented public school system. And the educational authorities were quick to defend the preeminence of the English language throughout the province. From 1902 to 1937 the importance of English in the curriculum was stressed in almost every issue of the Journal of Education and in the Annual Reports of the Department of Education.

But in spite of these strong anglophile tendencies, there were clear signs in the early 1930's at least that a few Nova Scotian educators were beginning to stress the bilingual nature of the Canadian nation and the importance of the study of French. Thus in 1932, a Committee on Studies of the Department of Education revised the curriculum and placed more emphasis on French and declared solemnly that:

> French is given its due emphasis, because of the fact that Nova Scotia is a bi-lingual country and our people should have more actual facility in this language.[35]

Two years earlier the Chief Inspector of Schools had asked: "Apropos of French, why is it that in our schools it is usually called a foreign language?" [36]

It is clear that strong opposition to the French language assuming a position of paramount importance in the Acadian schools was one important reason for the long delay from 1902 to 1939 in changing the regulations for Acadian education. But surely another reason for the delay was the tactics adopted by the Acadian leaders to promote their programme. They almost never sought publicity for their cause, nor did they attempt to use open political channels to compel concessions from the provincial government.[37] They were content to embrace a policy of "quiet cooperation" and behind the scenes manipulation. Such tactics were quite justifiable over a short period of time. But when no concessions had been won after thirty years, it can be argued that there was good justification for a dramatic change in strategy. Several Acadians who were involved in the negotiations of the 1920's and 1930's have written about their experiences.[38] The words that they use most often are "discreet", "quiet", and "cooperative". But it is difficult to know when "discreet" blurs into timidity and "quiet" into apathy.

Perhaps if public pressure had been exerted by the Acadians for educational reforms, English-speaking Nova Scotians would have violently opposed these reforms.

However, there is some evidence to suggest that the opposite might have happened. The influential Halifax Chronicle editorialized early in 1939 and in so doing probably reflected the Nova Scotia consensus:

> There is a definite bilinguality about this dominion. It need not be a handicap, however, if both groups exhibit some tolerance. A spirit of give and take will make it possible for both tongues to flourish and give this country a distinctive charm.[39]

The Acadians relied on the political influence of the Honourable Willie Comeau, and of course ultimately this reliance justified itself. However, even in the political sphere the Acadians were careful to say nothing that might alienate anyone. Comeau said nothing in the Legislative Assembly about Acadian education and the question never became an election issue or a matter for public discussion.

It can be argued that some debate regarding the special role of Acadian education in Nova Scotia would have greatly benefitted all Nova Scotians. For the English Nova Scotians such a debate might have convinced them that the Acadians had legitimate, if different, social and cultural goals. For the Acadians, a discussion of the vital issues regarding education was necessary for much the same reasons. Many Acadians were growing indifferent to their historical heritage and were becoming - to use one of their priests' phrase - "a rootless people".[40] They

wanted their children to learn English since English was the language of business and the language spoken by those Nova Scotians who had succeeded financially. This indifference to the French language combined with the timidity of the Acadian educational leaders produced a vacuum of action and positive thought. Thus it was not until 1939 that the Acadians won some rights which should have been theirs many years before. But the 1939 regulations were still only a timid step in the right direction. And even though they had won this one short step forward, they had actually lost some ground in another vital part of their programme.

In 1926, three Nova Scotia Universities were approached by the Department of Education and authorized to offer classes in Education. After taking these courses and graduating with a B.A.the graduate was eligible for a class A teaching license, the second highest certificate in Nova Scotia.[41] These University education programmes were later changed to include a graduate year of educational studies and another university was authorized to offer these courses.[42] Ste. Anne's College was not among the authorized institutions and there seems to have been little or no effort made to have it included on the approved Nova Scotia list. Such approval would automatically have provided the Acadians with an institution for the instruction of Acadian teachers in both French and English.

The 1939 Acadian programme dealt with curriculum and texts, both of which were very important for the proper functioning of the classroom but which were largely meaningless without well-trained teachers. The failure to press for and to obtain this most vital concession - the proper training of Acadian bilingual teachers - meant that Acadian students interested in teaching were forced to attend the Truro Normal School or the English Universities in Nova Scotia. In none of these institutions was Acadian history, culture and traditions awarded a prominent place. Moreover, the French language was considered to be an educational frill. To pass their courses and to improve their teaching licenses Acadian teachers were compelled to fit the prevailing English mould. This was a strange kind of bilingualism.

CHAPTER IV

YEARS OF SUCCESS OR FAILURE? 1939 - 1965

1939 can be considered a significant year for the Acadians of Nova Scotia largely because of the revised school curriculum. Unfortunately it was also a significant year for the whole of the western world. The outbreak of World War II, requiring a tremendous mobilization of national resources and a concentration of national effort, naturally led to a delay in the implementation of any programmes outside the direct sphere of the war effort. Although a list of new Acadian texts had been published in 1939, they were not made available until 1941 and consequently any new programme could not begin until that year.[1]

By 1941, when the new plan became operative, a slight shift in the official interpretation of the programme was already apparent. The 1939 curriculum statement indicated that some instruction through the medium of the French language could continue in the classrooms through Grade IX and that from Grades 1-VI teaching in French would occupy approximately 90% of school recitation time. But in 1941, Acadian school regulations stated that "in the new programme French and English are taught concurrently in all grades,"[2] and that English would become the sole medium of instruction beginning with Grade IX.[3]

Despite this setback, 1941 was a year of progress

for the cause of Acadian education. Not only were new texts introduced but a summer course for bilingual teachers was begun at Ste. Anne's College. Since the Department of Education had approved of this course and stated that it was specifically designed for the teachers in the bilingual schools, it was hoped that the course would eventually be expanded into a full year programme.[4] If this had happened the Acadians would have finally established a system of teacher training both separate and different from that required for the English-speaking schools of Nova Scotia. And it seemed that education officials in Halifax approved of the step taken in this direction. Unlike all previous bilingual courses the one offered at Ste. Anne's could be used for credit toward a higher degree of teaching license. In addition, all student travel expenses to and from Church Point were paid for by the province which also undertook the support of the programme by paying the salaries of three of the professors who taught the summer course.[5]

In spite of this governmental encouragement, the programme faltered and finally was abandoned in 1946.[6] It was never broadened beyond a summer course. For, despite its many advantages not enough bilingual teachers enrolled at Ste. Anne's. Perhaps the Acadians remembered their past disenchantment with bilingual programmes and stayed away from the present opportunity offered them. More likely, the Ste. Anne's programme was simply a victim of the war situation. As men went away to war and industry mobilized

for maximum effort, jobs became readily available and most of them paid much better than teaching. The ranks of Nova Scotian teachers, already somewhat depleted by the enlistment of many men in the army, were reduced significantly by the wholesale desertion of women to better paying positions in industry. Whereas the qualifications and training of all Nova Scotian teachers had risen steadily throughout the 1930's, they declined at an alarmingly rapid rate from 1941 to 1946. By 1946, more than one-third of the teachers in the public schools of the province possessed only a class C, a Class D, or a temporary license (equivalent to a Grade XI education with almost no further training).[7] With teaching positions so easy to obtain and standards so loosely enforced neither English nor Acadian teachers felt any impetus for professional advancement. In 1941, the Halifax Summer School for English speaking teachers was discontinued. This programme was resumed in 1944, but of course the Halifax Summer School had a much larger potential body of students to draw upon and so it was able to limp by until the end of the War.[8]

Poorly qualified and indifferent teachers probably killed the beginning of a promising teacher training programme. They also partially negated any gains won from the 1939 curriculum revision. Teachers who were inadequate in both English and French were hardly the persons to inaugurate a new programme of education. In 1944, Mr. J. A. Comeau, Inspector of Schools for Richmond County, discussed the

general situation that he encountered daily in the bilingual schools:

> It has been impossible to staff some of the Acadian schools in Antigonish and Guysborough Counties with bi-lingual teachers for many years now. The same is true in a few sections of Inverness North and Richmond. Even in schools where teachers are French, it is too often apparent that their knowledge of French was secured from teachers who never had an opportunity to learn the language themselves. And so the lack of trained French teachers goes back many years during which time the schools failed to give what was expected of them through no fault of the teachers, who did not have the opportunity to obtain proper training. Occasionally we are able to secure a college trained teacher with a good command of French and English and immediately we see a superior response from the pupils. [9]

One year later Mr. Comeau once again stressed the inadequate training of the bilingual teachers:

> The training of teachers for our Acadian schools is as much a problem to-day as it was 50 years ago....The task of teaching in a bi-lingual school is a special one and as such calls for a personnel with special training. A sound knowledge of French as well as English is required. Likewise, a teacher must possess a good knowledge of the history, cultural habits and aptitudes of the people with whom he or she is called upon to work. Little blame may be attached to our teachers since they work to the best of their ability. The need for further in-service training is urgent. When our teachers attain a standard of more adequate training, the Acadian schools may well develop on a par with others.[10]

School inspectors for English-speaking districts made much the same complaints about their teaching personnel during the war years and even later. But what distinguished English-speaking Nova Scotians from the Acadians was that a

remedy was available to them. University teacher training and the Truro Normal School provided a coherent and recognized programme for professional improvement and after 1946 professional standards quickly began to rise in the English schools.[11]

Acadians did not lag too far behind their English-speaking counterparts. They also attempted to avail themselves of professional training after 1946; but because the programme at Ste. Anne's had been allowed to die, they were forced to return to the English-speaking universities and Normal School for their training.[12] Bilingual teachers thus received the same training as the English-speaking teachers, but the professional programme was not as useful to them because it had little relationship to the situation they encountered in their classrooms.

However, Acadian enrollment at the English-oriented professional schools was not wholly illogical. Although the 1939 regulations had stipulated that French should be the major medium of instruction, it was almost impossible to use the mother tongue for as large a proportion of time as had originally been expected. Once again, as with the 1902 regulations, the lack of French texts radically altered the structure and emphasis of the Acadian programme. In each grade, from 1-VI, either one or two French texts were prescribed. They were a reader and perhaps also a French grammar. There were no history or geography texts available except the ones printed for the use of the English-speaking

public schools. The 1939 regulations had specifically stated that arithmetic had to be taught in English and English reading and grammar was naturally taught from an English text.[13] In effect, the student could learn to read in French but he was then given no material upon which to practice his skills. Since English was the sole language of instruction from Grade IX on, and the high school graduating exams had to be written in English,[14] it was obviously necessary to devote a large proportion of school time to the mastery of this language. With teacher training facilities and the majority of texts solely in English, bilingual teachers in Nova Scotia could not avoid recognizing and teaching the supremacy of that language throughout all levels of the school system.

However, some gains had been made in 1939. The French programme for Acadians had been completely reorganized and even in the high school grades Acadian French language courses differed from those in the English-speaking schools. A thoroughly rationalized and integrated programme of French studies was planned from Grades 1-XII. Although Acadians still took French only as an optional foreign language in Grades X-XII, the courses available to them in those grades were considered to be at a higher and more comprehensive level than those planned for the English-speaking students.[15]

Acadians generally accepted the need for a working knowledge of both French and English. To some extent the improved French programme satisfied their desire for continued

use of the mother tongue while the heavy emphasis on English met with the approval of the majority of parents who wanted their children to be able successfully to compete in the economic life of the province. There is an oft-quoted Acadian saying:

> Sure, we want to know English for business and to speak another language, but we want to know French like hell to say our prayers.[16]

One evidence of the general complacency could be seen in the choice of reading matter made by some of the Acadians. In almost all of the villages and towns of the Argyle and Clare area the Arcadian newspaper, Le Petit Courier, outsold its rival, L'Evangeline.[17] Of course, Le Petit Courier was published in Nova Scotia while L'Evangeline came from New Brunswick. But the content of the two papers also differed greatly. The Nova Scotian newspaper stressed local events and news on a social level in quite distinct contrast to the more sophisticated and informative New Brunswick publication.

Despite the general calm, some changes did take place soon after the end of the War. In 1947 French adult education courses were begun in Clare, in southwestern Nova Scotia. A shopmobile (a traveling truck equipped with tools used for vocational training) was placed in the Argyle district and a number of classes in domestic science in French were offered to students in both southwestern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton.[18]

By 1948, the awakening interest of parents in education could be noted by the rapid growth of a Home and School Association in the Argyle area. Direct participation by adults in evening classes also increased and one of these classes used its extra-curricular time to prepare and offer a performance of Evangeline on two successive nights which was seen by over 1,200 people.[19] Educational radio was being utilized by government authorities in Halifax and some of the weekly programmes offered instruction in French.[20]

The new Acadian enthusiasm for education came not only from the public but also from the ranks of the bilingual teachers. During the fall of 1948 they organized at least ten study clubs and met monthly to discuss the situation in the schools. They were particularly concerned with the defects in the curriculum and with the need for supplementary reading material.[21] One consequence of their deliberations was a stronger sense of unity. Another was the desire to make contact with other French educators throughout Canada. Thus in 1948 L'Association des Instituteurs acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse affiliated with the national group known as L'Association Canadienne des Educateurs de Langue française.[22] In 1949 the more distinctly Acadian oriented L'Association Acadienne de l'Education was founded.[23]

As usual, Acadians shared the educational feelings of their English-speaking neighbors. Their increased interest in education and their renewed desire for a change

in curriculum were echoed by the English-speaking teachers in Nova Scotia and indeed throughout Canada. In 1947 a committee was established by the Nova Scotia Department of Education to suggest changes in the curriculum for Grades I-Vl. Teachers throughout the province were encouraged to offer their advice and participation.[24] During the 1949-50 school year a Committee on Acadian Texts was established. Prominent among its members were Mr. A. B. Morrison, Director of Curriculum and Research for the Department of Education, Mr. J. A. Comeau, Inspector for Clare and Argyle, Mr. Stanley Edwards, Professor of French at the Truro Normal School, and Mr. R. J. Chiasson, then a French instructor at St. Francis Xavier University and later an inspector of bilingual schools. After some discussion, their recommendations for changes in the prescribed texts were approved and new Acadian texts were introduced for Grades 1-lV, Vlll-X.[25] Although Acadian educators felt that these texts were more useful and better prepared than their predecessors, the prescribed French books in each grade still remained solely a reader and a grammar.[26]

As a result of these changes, a one week summer course for bilingual teachers was held at Arichat in 1953. At that time bilingual teachers were also acquainted with some of the French educational films stocked by the Department of Education Film Library and available to their schools.[27]

While the new texts did not and could not radically

alter the Acadian system of education by themselves, their approval by the Halifax authorities in a comparatively short time buoyed the spirits of the Acadian educators. Their favorable reaction was commented upon by Mr. R. J. Chiasson, Inspector for Richmond County:

> The new French reading programme has made an important change in the bilingual schools of the county. It is evident that more progress has been made than was possible with the old readers. The pupils read more naturally and the attitude of the teachers has improved; they are encouraged and thus optimistic that progress can be achieved.[28]

As Acadians became hopeful, they also became more active. In 1954 many teachers' study groups met and prepared French teaching guides for the new programme.[29] In 1955 a new Acadian reader was prescribed for Grade V students and in 1956 pupils in Grade VI also received a new reader.[30] The Inspector for Clare and Argyle, J. A. Comeau, made this comment on their reaction:

> Generally speaking classroom work is very satisfactory....At the same time teachers follow every step in curriculum development so that no delays occur when new courses are introduced.[31]

In 1957, Mr. R. J. Chiasson was appointed Acadian Visitor for Eastern Nova Scotia but he still continued in his capacity as Inspector for Richmond County.[32] Thus he attempted to supervise all of the schools in the county in addition to all of the bilingual schools in northeastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. It was far too much responsibility for any one man to shoulder.

For many years, and with increasing emphasis after 1950, a programme of rural high school consolidation dominated the policy of the provincial Department of Education. This policy soon replaced most of the high school teaching in ungraded schools in rural areas with a new programme of graded teaching in larger centralized schools. As a result, the quality of teaching improved and so too did the number of students continuing on to high school. Despite this upward trend, in 1954 only 15% of the students in an average elementary class continued their education long enough to receive a Grade XI diploma;[33] and a statement issued by Premier Stanfield in 1962 sadly noted that less than 25% of the pupils entering Grade VII in 1959 would continue their studies long enough to graduate from Grade XI.[34] Those who did benefit from the consolidation programme did not necessarily receive a better Acadian education. Many Acadians wanted to go to the vocational high schools and usually these schools were run by and for English-speaking Nova Scotians. This situation was particularly true of Acadians in Cape Breton but even in the Clare and Argyle areas the Inspector of Schools reported that, "Since a large number of high school pupils from Argyle are enrolled in the Yarmouth Vocational School, a relatively small number of pupils from these grades are left in

the schools."[35]

Yet it cannot be denied that Acadians were sharing in the general uplifting of educational standards in the public schools. Although some very important proposals for changes in the Acadian programme of studies were proposed to the Department of Education in 1957 and were rejected by it in 1959,[36] a new reading programme was accepted in 1960 and changes and additions to that programme were made from time to time up to the present date.[37]

What can and must be questioned is the value of this education in Acadian terms. At the present moment a great degree of flexibility exists in the Acadian school teaching programme. Only French readers and grammars are prescribed Acadian texts but teachers are free to use the vernacular to discuss other topics. Moreover, a strong Home and School movement and an interest in adult education has absorbed and committed Acadian communities to the schoolhouses within their midst. What does the schoolhouse offer? It offers French language instruction but no course on Acadian culture; it offers French grammar, but no discussion of Acadia's past, or perhaps even more significantly, its future. Many educators have commented upon the desire and insistence of parents that their children know English, the language of business, and some have discussed the role of French as the language of the family and the church.[38] Without a doubt, most Acadians would prefer more

English in their schools and less French. However, the leaders, especially the priests, have endeavored and are endeavoring to convince the rank and file that it is essential to maintain a truly bilingual educational system. The leaders do not want the Acadians to lose contact with their historical heritage. But the leaders have received little encouragement from the great majority of the Acadians.

Acadian leaders have emphasized that the French language is only one part of their people's heritage and that a knowledge of Acadian history is also important. And yet there are no Acadian history texts, nor have any been significantly discussed. The yearly "Evangeline" celebrations last a very short while and, at least in part, are inspired by a very sensible desire for the tourist's dollar. But where in the school curriculum is there emphasis on Acadian songs, folk art, literary expression, or political thought? After all the greatly studied Acadian epic, Evangeline, is not a piece of native inspiration, but the creation of a New Englander.

Perhaps the curriculum lacks these topics because they do not exist or are too painfully meagre to contemplate. Yet such shortcomings must also be partially blamed on the school system as it has developed. A programme devoid of cultural meaning could not possibly inspire much enthusiasm for creative activity in any generation.

Still, it is true that education consists of more

than the courses in the school curriculum. Where else could the Acadians have turned to find themselves and their past? One obvious answer would be to the libraries. The question of supplementary reading becomes especially important because of the lack of available French school texts. School libraries had existed in some rudimentary form as early as the schools themselves and by the early 1900's the Council of Public Instruction was issuing recommended lists and offering small payments for the support of school libraries. Until 1930, no French books appeared on the recommended lists. At that time, the educational authorities began a programme of circulating libraries for rural districts and French books were included for the school libraries in bilingual areas.[39] However, the choice of books was determined by the Halifax officials and the selection was very limited. Acadians did little to add to their local stock. Their indifference was shared by their English-speaking neighbors throughout the 1930's. However, the Acadians did receive some books from outside sources. These books were usually donated by the Consul-General of France who resided in Halifax.[40] But, as the Inspector for Clare and Argyle noted, despite these gifts, libraries, "which are considered of lesser importance, have been somewhat neglected."[41]

In 1928 a Teachers' Library was established at the Education Office in Halifax. At first it purchased only English works but by the 1950's it did contain some

French books.[42] These books soon had a large circulation among the bilingual teachers.[43] However, despite this early official support of the library principle, it was not until 1937 that the Legislature passed an act authorizing the support of regional libraries. During that same year the Canadian government surveyed libraries in Canada and the United States. Nova Scotia tied for lowest place in per capita expenditure on public libraries and per capita circulation of books, along with Mississippi and Arkansas in the United States.[44]

In 1946 the Department of Education Annual Report stated that, "A weakness in all plans for adult education is the wide lack of library service in Nova Scotia."[45] Earlier, in 1938 a survey by a prominent librarian led to this criticism of the provincial financial policy for libraries:

> ...a policy which spends millions in teaching people to read and grudges thousands in providing them with books is as short-sighted as would be the policy of a railway company which provided trains and grudged the cost of time tables.[46]

Although a more generous library programme was pursued in the 1950's and 1960's, Nova Scotia remains generally short of libraries. The few regional units serving large areas with comparatively small collections naturally emphasize English books. As late as 1959 an Acadian educator still characterized the library situation as one of unfilled

need and described it in this manner:

> We spend millions of dollars to educate our boys and girls only to turn them out into a "bookless" society.[47]

It can be argued, though perhaps not very effectively, that the economic backwardness of the Acadians was responsible for the lack of course content in their schools. Until recently most Acadians left school by Grade VIII and worked as artisans, fishermen or farmers. They wanted only the necessary minimums from the schoolhouse and their taxes really were not adequate to provide much more. Under these circumstances they looked to the church and to La Société de l'Assomption for their cultural needs.[48] Both the church and their fraternal society remained strictly Acadian while the schoolhouse could be suspect as the institution most dominated by alien English-speaking Nova Scotians in Halifax. However, the Acadians did share a common disadvantage with the English-speaking rural groups in the province. Under the prevailing system of taxation the amount of money available per urban classroom was sometimes more than double that available for a rural classroom despite provincial grants designed to minimize the difference.[49] Rural schools were usually ungraded while urban schools usually provided a teacher for each grade. Moreover, rural schools paid their teachers less than urban schools and so as a rule they had to content themselves with the least qualified instructors.

This wage differential continues up to the present time. In 1962 the average salary for rural and village teachers was $2,956, while the average urban teacher earned $4,105.[50] Apologists for the rural system have defended it on the grounds that it developed individual initiative. Yet in Grade XI examinations in 1950, 62.4% of urban students, 44.8% of village students, and only 16.4% of rural students passed.[51] By 1962 the gap in performance had narrowed to 52.8% success for urban students versus 45.0% for rural students, largely as a result of the success of the rural consolidated high school programme during this period.[52]

Unquestionably Acadian education suffered for economic reasons. Depressed rural areas could not support a first-class educational system. But it can also be argued that the Acadians themselves were largely responsible for the inadequacies of the bilingual programme. They refused to apply political pressure to win important concessions. Perhaps the vast majority of the Acadians were satisfied with the status quo. Their general apathy may have given them what they in fact wanted.

But, at the very least, some Acadian leaders were committed to the idea of a bilingual school program. Over the years they made many suggestions and many protests but always cautiously, quietly, discreetly, and so, as a result, they often failed to leave any impression. In 1927 the

Superintendent of Education, Henry F. Munro, wrote a comprehensive survey of the educational programme in Nova Scotia. It was printed in the Annual Report of the Department of Education and was thought significant enough to reprint in the Halifax Chronicle and in a separate pamphlet. Acadian schools were never mentioned in it.[53] In 1944, the Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Provincial Development and Rehabilitation (popularly known as the Dawson Commission) published an extensive report on the province, including its educational system. Acadian schools were not mentioned in it.[54] In 1954 another Royal Commission undertook a study on public school finance.[55] Acadian schools were never mentioned in it. In the years between 1954 and 1965 the Nova Scotian Education Office Gazette and the Journal of Education have published articles on almost every aspect of the public school system but, of course, Acadian schools are never mentioned in them.[56]

More significant than the official indifference of the English-speaking educational authorities is the apathy of the Acadian majority and the timidity of some of the leaders. In the 1957/58 school year the school boards and Home and School Associations of Richmond and Inverness Counties made representations to the Department of Education requesting a lower pupil-teacher ratio in bilingual schools. As a result of these requests a committee composed of the Chief Inspector, Mr. H. J. Nason, Inspector J. A. Comeau of Clare and Argyle, Inspector George Lent of

Inverness County, Mr. A. J. Saulnier, Rural Supervisor for Inverness County, Mr. Maurice Belliveau, Rural Supervisor for Clare and Argyle, and Mr. R. J. Chiasson, Inspector of Schools for Richmond County, was formed. After much deliberation it submitted its recommendations to the Department of Education. These recommendations called for a lower pupil-teacher ratio in bilingual schools than in the English-speaking schools. They also suggested that bilingual teachers should be paid for summer school instruction at a French-speaking university outside the province in much the same manner that English-speaking teachers received full payment for any professional education taken within the province.[57] These recommendations were important because they emphasized the need for programmes and regulations geared to the special conditions found within the bilingual school system, yet the Department of Education disposed of them with a single sentence in its 1959 Annual Report which stated that, "The recommendations were not approved."[58] Surely such important suggestions required greater discussion than this one sentence dismissal, and, if no one else was willing, the Acadian leaders should have attempted to arouse public attention about this matter. Instead they contented themselves with periodically reviving this question and proposing it again to the Department of Education.

Not only have the Acadians discreetly forfeited their political power but in many ways they have abandoned

one of the institutions which is most uniquely their own. Ste. Anne's College became the main institution for Acadian higher education in Nova Scotia soon after it was founded. Most of the prominent Acadian political leaders and teachers were trained at the College. They repaid their debt to it by becoming prominently involved in the cause of Acadian education and Ste. Anne's graduates staffed a large portion of the various committees and groups that sought reform of the Acadian programme throughout the twentieth century. However, the College and its alumni were unwilling or unable to persuade the Halifax officials to recognize Ste. Anne's as an authorized teacher training institute. Moreover, the College was never able to establish professional schools because of its limited financial resources. Thus, Acadian students who sought graduate or professional training were compelled to enroll at the English-speaking universities in Nova Scotia or the French-speaking universities in Quebec and elsewhere. Since these students formed the group most likely to provide community leadership, the status of Ste. Anne's College as the intellectual center of the Acadian community was increasingly diminished. Fewer Acadians enrolled at Ste. Anne's but their places were soon taken by French Canadians who sought a college where they could study in French and yet where they would have frequent opportunities to hear and speak English. The percentage of students from Quebec constantly increased from the 1940's onward, and by

the academic year 1963/64 they composed more than half of the student body.[59] Although the College still exercises an important intellectual and spiritual influence on the Acadian communities in the Clare and Argyle region, it no longer commands the intellectual allegiance of the rising class of Acadian professionals who form the elite of those communities. The dissolution of the tie between the College and the Acadian professional and intellectual leaders has left the Acadian community without a strong intellectual center capable of persuading the majority of Acadians of the necessity for maintaining and expanding the bilingual programme in the public schools.

The Acadian fraternal society, La Société de l'Assomption, does help to encourage a French education for Acadians by offering a number of scholarships to French-speaking universities located outside the province. But of course these scholarships also tend to deliver control of Acadian higher education into the hands of the French Canadians or Acadians of New Brunswick and to take it away from Ste. Anne's.

Recent census figures tend to support the contention that the majority of Acadians have consciously or unconsciously decided to assimilate with the English-speaking majority. Despite the so-called "revenge of the cradle" whereby higher birth rates among the Acadians have increased the percentage of the provincial population claiming French

origin, various census figures have shown that the increase in numbers is more apparent than real. These figures show a continuing trend toward assimilation of the Acadian community in Nova Scotia:[60]

	ACADIANS CLAIMING ENGLISH AS THEIR MOTHER TONGUE	ACADIANS CLAIMING FRENCH AS THEIR MOTHER TONGUE
1931	32.0%	67.7%
1941	39.2	60.3
1951	49.2	50.7
1961	56.9	42.8

Thus, after more than sixty years of special Acadian schools, more than half the Acadians claimed English as their mother tongue. With the continued breakdown of the isolation of Acadian communities by highways and telephones and the even more significant growth in communication media such as radio and television,[61] one can only forsee a greatly increased rate of assimilation for the Acadians, all other factors being equal. Whether the status quo will remain unchanged in the face of heightened French Canadian pressure throughout the rest of Canada is the important question to be decided at this time.

And what of the other Nova Scotians? If we are to judge from the Department of Education Annual Reports they were also having a problem with bilingualism. They had great difficulty studying French or any other foreign

language and they also encountered problems when they attempted to study English. From 1864 on, inspectors and supervisors of the public schools complained about the generally low level of English comprehension and usage.[62] In 1930 the school examiner for Grade X French commented:[63]

> Another point we would like to stress is English; it is simply disgraceful.... Teachers would be rendering a real service to their pupils by barring them from foreign languages until they can write their English at least correctly.

By 1947 the Principal of the Normal School at Truro, became so appalled by the errors in English usage among the students at the school that he requested permission to authorize a special paper in English comprehension as a pre-requisite for graduation.[64] Although this new requirement caused extra difficulties for Acadian pupils, it was not aimed at them but at the average English speaking student. After reviewing the capabilities of the English-speaking students in their mother tongue the Principal was moved to note that, "Somehow, we have drifted and failed lamentably, and unnecessarily."[65] Despite the attempt to upgrade standards of instruction in the English language, by 1952 the Truro Normal School felt compelled to establish a language arts department designed to raise standards of English comprehension and usage. The authorities at Truro felt that this move was necessary because, as the Principal noted, "Our experience at the Normal College for many years has shown that student-teachers coming to us are inadequately

prepared in the fundamentals of the English language."[66]

In 1958 the Central Advisory Committee on Education in the Atlantic Provinces tested approximately 95% of the high school students in Grades X1 and X11 of the four Atlantic Provinces. The result of those tests indicated that the high school students in these provinces were significantly behind American students of their age group in the subjects of English and mathematics.[67]

Unlike the English study programme, the French foreign language programme improved noticeably over the course of the years. Despite the fact that French remains an optional foreign language, the school programme has been revised to emphasize its importance. In 1931 the Curriculum Revision Committee changed the programme of study in the public schools so that French could be begun as an elective in Grade V11 instead of in Grade X. Latin, the next most favored language did not begin until Grade V111, whereas German and Spanish study was not offered until Grade X.[68] The favored place of French in the curriculum was stressed in the statement in the 1932 Annual Report that;

> 'French is given its due emphasis because of the fact that Nova Scotia is a bi-lingual country and our people should have more actual facility in this language."[69]

In 1937 the Normal School began a special programme designed to develop "a desire and ability to speak French".[70] In 1953 a revision of the French language programme in the

public schools was begun and it was continued through 1960. By that date, an oral question on the French high school examination became compulsory.[71] Despite the somewhat controversial Acadian contention that English should not be introduced until students were fluent in French, current educational theory among English-speaking Nova Scotians emphasizes the early introduction of French. New programmes designed to introduce French instruction in Grade V and earlier are currently being tested. Moreover, French tape recordings and educational radio programs are being utilized to promote greater comprehension of and interest in that language.[72]

One sour note must be interjected in this progress report. In 1955 a survey was made of the teachers of French in Nova Scotia's English-speaking schools. 67% of those surveyed admitted that they could not carry on a conversation in French, 5% had limited fluency, while only 27% could converse fluently.[73] Such statistics do not argue well for real progress in French instruction.

Thus both the English and the French-speaking students in Nova Scotia have bilingual problems that must be mastered. They both have much to accomplish. However, the English-speaking group has a very distinct advantage because the provincial educational programme is geared to its culture and its needs. The Acadian community, on the other hand, is compelled to build upon a programme so vague

that it does not even define what constitutes the conditions requiring the erection of an Acadian school, and yet it is also so detailed that it prescribes all the texts, all the requirements for high school graduation, and all the programmes for teacher training.

Under these circumstances Acadian education has become separate but not equal. Teachers are compelled to work under a system that makes few major adjustments or provisions for the needs of their students. Despite the fact that separate divisions and directorships have been established within the framework of the Department of Education for programmes in curriculum revision, vocational education, music instruction, adult education, the work of the Provincial Library and the Museum of Science, and in home economics and temperance education, there has never been a separate department or a special director in charge of the Acadian educational programme. The two bilingual school inspectors are, after all, only equals in the company of the fifteen other inspectors. Although these two inspectors naturally consult on matters of mutual interest, they are only authorized to implement a school programme prepared by others. That programme has not even been flexible enough to provide for a Handbook of Instruction for teachers in the bilingual schools, although such handbooks exist for almost every school subject.

To date, such a situation has created an Acadian school policy that is totally irrational unless one concedes that its major purpose is simply the gradual assimilation of the Acadian community. Although Acadian students are allowed to read from a French reader and are permitted to discuss subjects such as history or geography in French, they are required to take exactly the same high school examinations as the English-speaking students. Thus, in effect, there is no real academic credit for any part of the bilingual programme. And the situation is basically the same for bilingual teachers. There is no professional recognition of their special qualifications nor is there any such thing as a bilingual teaching license. As a result, Acadian teachers are usually hired on the basis of their French origin and not because of their special knowledge of French. Because there is no regulation that defines the necessary conditions for the establishment of an Acadian school, custom has simply dictated that these schools would only be built in overwhelmingly predominant Acadian communities. Thus when Acadians followed the pattern of all Nova Scotians in the twentieth century and moved from the farm and village to larger towns and cities, they had no legal structure upon which to base their requests for bilingual schools. Because of their natural discretion and desire for peace they did not protest very strongly against this situation. The census statistics already cited show the

results of this policy.

If, as one Superintendent of Education has already noted, Nova Scotia is truly a bilingual country, some of the problems now faced by the Acadians may disappear simply because of the effort of the English-speaking Nova Scotians to devote more time and study to French instruction. The earlier introduction of French in the public schools is one move in this direction. Increased French programming on educational and commercial radio and television is another. But to date progress on the bilingual problem has been very slow in Nova Scotia, while the assimilation of the Acadians has been fairly rapid. Even if fully implemented, a bilingual programme for Nova Scotia would not have the religious and historical emphasis that the Acadian leaders desire. Under these circumstances the leaders must soon decide whether the tactics and policies they have followed for so many years can actually succeed in creating the atmosphere for a fruitful dialogue with the Department of Education and with the English-speaking majority which it has often represented.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER I

1. It should be noted that up to 1784 the term Nova Scotia also included New Brunswick. Moreover, Cape Breton Island was regarded as being part of Nova Scotia from 1758 to 1784 and from 1820 to the present time.
2. C.B. Fergusson, The Inauguration of the Free School System in Nova Scotia (Halifax, 1964), 15.
3. P.M. Dagnaud, Les Français du Sud-Ouest de la Nouvelle Écosse (Besançon, 1905), 165.
4. J.B. Brebner, New England's Outpost (New York, 1927), 15.
5. Ibid., 40-41.
6. P.W. Thibeau, Education in Nova Scotia before 1811 (Washington, 1922), 17-23.
7. O. LeGrésley, L'Enseignement du Français en Acadie (1604-1926) (Bathurst-Ouest, 1926), 35.
8. See especially L. Stone, "The Educational Revolution in England, 1560-1640," Past and Present, No.28 (July, 1964) 40-80.
9. Thibeau, Education in Nova Scotia before 1811, 24-25.
10. Ibid., 25.
11. Le Gresley, L'Enseignement du Français en Acadie, 45-54.
12. Ibid., 81.
13. Stone, "The Educational Revolution in England," 43.
14. Thibeau, Education in Nova Scotia before 1811, 31.
15. Brebner, New England's Outpost, 40.
16. T.B. Akins, Selections from the Public Documents of the Province of Nova Scotia (Halifax, 1869), 86, Governor Philipps to the Duke of Newcastle, Sept. 2, 1730.

17. J.S. McLennan, Louisbourg from its Foundation to its Fall 1713-1758 (Sydney, 1957), 87-88.

18. Thibeau, Education in Nova Scotia before 1811, 31.

19. Ibid., 15.

20. J.H. Bingay, Public Education in Nova Scotia (Kingston, N.S., 1919), 2.

21. See especially Akins, Selections from the Public Documents of Nova Scotia, 84-85.

Oath Obtained by Governor Philipps from the People of Annapolis River, in the Winter of 1730.

Of the 227 Acadians signing the document only forty-nine signed their names.

22. T.B. Akins, A Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Church of England in the North American Provinces (Halifax, 1849), 13, J. Pownall to the S.P.G., April 6, 1749.

23. C.H. Lincoln, Correspondence of William Shirley (New York, 1912), I, 337, Shirley to Newcastle, Aug. 15, 1746.

24. Akins, A Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Church of England, 7.

25. Le Grésley, L'Enseignement du Français en Acadie, 87.

26. H. Massignon, Les Parlers Français d'Acadie (Paris, 1962), I, 26-27.

27. Dagnaud, Les Français du Sud-Ouest de la Nouvelle Ecosse, 11-13; Massignon, Les Parlers Français d'Acadie, I, 27.

28. Massignon, Les Parlers Français d'Acadie, I, 27.

29. A. Chiasson, Chéticamp Histoire et Traditions Acadiennes (Moncton, 1961), 29-35.

30. Public Archives of Nova Scotia [P.A.N.S.], Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1766, cap. 7.

31. Thibeau, Education in Nova Scotia before 1811, 101.

32. Le Grésley, L'Enseignement du Français en Acadie, 89.

33. Bingay, Public Education in Nova Scotia, 26.

34. Chiasson, Chéticamp Histoire et Traditions Acadiennes, 160; Dagnaud, Les Français du Sud-Ouest de la Nouvelle Ecosse, 39-52.

35. V.J. Pottier, "An Acadian Becomes a Nova Scotian," Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections, 1951, Vol.29, 35.

36. H.L. D'Entremont, "Father Jean Mande Sigogne, 1799-1844," Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections, 1936, Vol.23, 103.

37. L.L. Surette, "The Abbé Jean Mande Sigogne, from 1763 to 1844," Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections, 1942, Vol.25, 176-179.

38. D'Entremont, "Father Jean Mande Sigogne," 110-111.

39. Ibid., 109.

40. Surette, "The Abbé Jean Mande Sigogne," 181-190.

41. For an excellent description of this school see Dagnaud, Les Français du Sud-Ouest de la Nouvelle Écosse, 177-193.

42. Ibid., 195.

43. Ibid., 166.

44. Ibid., 167-168.

45. P.A.N.S., Assembly Petitions Regarding Education, Sigogne to N.S. Government, Jan. 22, 1829.

46. C.B. Fergusson, The Inauguration of the Free School System in Nova Scotia, 9-11.

47. Chiasson, Chéticamp Histoire et Traditions Acadiennes, 160-161; A Johnston, A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, 1611-1827 (Antigonish, 1960), 122-123, 151, 235-236, 420.

48. Chiasson, Chéticamp Histoire et Traditions Acadiennes, 162.

49. Quoted in Le Grésley, L'Enseignement du Français en Acadie, 103.

50. Journals and Proceedings of the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia, 1825, 441-443.

51. Nova Scotian, Apr. 1, 1841.

52. See the reports of the debates found in the Nova Scotian and Acadian Recorder.

53. Journal of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 1841, 126.

54. Halifax Morning Post, Apr. 3, 1841.

55. Ibid.

56. Journal of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 1841, 192; Journal of the Nova Scotia Legislative Council, 1841, 97, 118, 121.

57. Le Grésley, L'Enseignement du Français en Acadie, 128.

58. Ibid., 128-129.

59. Journal of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 1854, 372.

60. Ibid., 1855, 216.

61. J.W. Dawson, Report on the Schools of Nova Scotia, 1850 (Halifax, 1851), 79, 81-82, 86-88. Argyle is the Pubnico-Eel Brook area; Clare is the St. Mary's Bay region.

62. J.W. Dawson, Report on the Schools of Nova Scotia, 1851 (Halifax, 1852), 17-18.

63. J.W. Dawson, Report on the Schools of Nova Scotia, 1852 (Halifax, 1853), 39.

64. J.W. Dawson, Report on the Schools of Nova Scotia, 1850, 82.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER II

1. Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1864, 1865, 1866. Hereafter referred to as Education Acts, 1864, 1865, 1866.
2. Education Act, 1864.
3. Ibid., 1864-66.
4. The Nova Scotia Royal Gazette (Feb.23, 1864).
5. Education Act, 1841.
6. Nova Scotia Journal of Education (Sept., 1866), 1.
7. Ibid. (June, 1867), iii.
8. Bingay, Public Education in Nova Scotia, 57.
9. Journal of Education (Oct., 1867), 161.
10. A. Hubert, "Écoles Acadiennes de Nouvelle-Écosse," Relations (Feb., 1942), 44.
11. Annual Report of the Schools in Nova Scotia (1865), 16.
12. For a detailed description of the church-school question in Nova Scotia see Sister Francis Xavier, "Educational Legislation in Nova Scotia and the Catholics," Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report (1957), 67-74.
13. C.F. MacRae (ed.), French Canada Today,(Sackville,.1961), 45 Rev. L.F. D'Entremont, "The Role of Religion Among the Acadians."
14. C.E. Edwards, "La Survivance de la Culture Française en Nouvelle-Écosse," (unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1945), 39.
15. Annual Report (1868), XIX.
16. Cited in the Journal of Education (Sept., 1866), 1.
17. Edwards, "La Survivance de la Culture Française," 19-58.
18. Annual Report (1869), 62.
19. Ibid. (1872), XV.

20. Ibid. (1866), 75.

21. Ibid.

22. One of the strongest advocates of Acadian education was L.S. Morse, Inspector of Schools for Digby-Annapolis. His report for 1883 ably summarized the arguments in favour of French as a medium of instruction. See Annual Report (1883), 23.

23. Journal of Education (1893), 29.

24. See the reports of the Inspectors for Richmond and Inverness Counties, in the Annual Report (1864-1902).

25. Ibid. (1878), 23-24.

26. Ibid. (1879), XX.

27. Journal of Education (1864-1902); Annual Report (1864-1902).

28. Ibid. (1879), 21-22.

29. Ibid. (1880), 23; ibid. (1903), 99.

30. Ibid. (1867), Table A.

31. Ibid. (1880), 21.

32. Debates of the Nova Scotia Assembly, 1864-1885.

33. Edwards, "La Survivance de la Culture Française," 73.

34. MacRae, French Canada Today, 81, M. Adelard Savoie, "The Acadians: a Dynamic Minority."

35. Annual Report (1872), VIII.

36. Collège Sainte-Anne Annuaire Générale (1964-5), 4.

37. Debates (1893), 179.

38. Annual Report (1898), 83.

39. Ibid. (1899), 79.

40. Ibid., 80.

41. Ibid. (1895), 133.

42. Journal of Education (Apr., 1896), 58.

43. Annual Report (1900), 169.
44. Ibid. (1906), iii.
45. Ibid. (1898), 83.
46. Debates (1904), 162.
47. Annual Report (1898), 83.
48. Ibid. (1900), 75.
49. Ibid. (1890-1902)
50. Journal of Education (Oct., 1903), 158-165.
51. Annual Report (1900), 78.
52. Ibid. (1907), 97-98.
53. MacRae, French Canada Today, 48, D'Entremont, "The Role of Religion Among the Acadians."
54. Annual Report (1900), 80.
55. Journal of Education (Oct., 1900), 144.
56. See Appendix A.
57. Annual Report (1899). 79; ibid. (1907), 103.
58. Ibid. (1907), iii.
59. Journal of Education (Oct., 1900), 144.
60. Ibid. (Apr., 1906), 71.
61. Hubert, "Écoles Acadiennes de Nouvelle Écosse," 44-45.
62. Ibid.
63. Journal of Education (Apr., 1906), 71.
64. Annual Report (1904), 64.
65. Ibid. (1903), 99.
66. See the Halifax Herald and Halifax Chronicle, 1902.
67. Debates (1903), 86-87.
68. See Education Review, 1902-1903.
69. Journal of Education (Apr., 1908), 149.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER III

1. Annual Report (1903), 61.

2. Ibid. (1910), 121. During that same year Mr. Benoit, the instructor for the summer bilingual programme, also organized a special non-credit course for the eighteen Acadian students enrolled in the regular year-long course offered at the Normal School. The declared purpose of that course was "to qualify these teachers to carry out the law relative to the teaching of English in Acadian schools." Ibid. (1910), 121.

3. Nova Scotia Department of Education Manual of School Law 1921, 308.

4. Joseph-Edouard Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français dans les Ecoles Publiques de la Nouvelle-Ecosse Depuis 1900" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Université de Montréal, 1948), 135.

5. Journal of Education (April, 1912), 133. That same issue of the Journal also carried the statement of the Committee to the Provincial Education Association that "the object of education is to transmit to the young the best inheritances of our race and civilization: their religion, their moral and social order, their science and industry, their literature and their art." (29)

6. Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français," 134. Mr. Comeau states that not even one student applied for the course in 1914. However, this figure has proven impossible to verify since in the period from 1913 to 1921 there was no mention made of the bilingual course in any of the official reports of the provincial educational authorities. The Truro Normal School did list the courses it offered in at least one issue of the Journal of Education each year and the bilingual summer course was not mentioned from 1913 to 1921.

7. Annual Report (1921), 214. The Annual Report announced the resumption of the bilingual summer classes in 1921. To date, this has been the last mention of the bilingual course as it was originally conceived by the Acadian Commission in 1902. Another summer course for bilingual teachers was begun at Ste. Anne's College in 1941, but it also proved to be short-lived.

8. Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français," 134.

9. In February, 1909, a petition requesting a French history text for the Acadian schools was sent to the government officials at Halifax. Approximately 2100 Acadians signed the petition which used uncommonly strong language to protest against the backward state of the bilingual schools. The signers argued that the study of Canadian history was as essential for Acadian children as for the other students in the province and they stated that such study could only be effective if French texts were provided. They concluded their argument with the view that the "study of Canadian History amongst the French children of this province who attend the common schools has heretofore been almost a complete failure." (P.A.N.S., Assembly Petitions, see the various petitions prepared in February and March, 1909.) Such strong language was very unusual for the Acadians and it is not surprising to learn that the petition barrage was organized by the author of a Canadian history book in French which he was anxious to sell to the province. The petitions specifically mentioned the book - L'Histoire Élementaire du Canada, by Ph. F. Bourgeois - and from the information available about the petitions it would seem that Mr. Bourgeois had them circulated by the local clergy who urged their parishioners to sign. Thus the petitions were in no sense the result of a spontaneous popular outburst on the part of the Acadians. When the educational authorities in Halifax chose to ignore the request for Mr.

Bourgeois' book, no further agitation took place. Still, almost 2100 people did demand a French history text and did indicate their awareness of the need for such books in the bilingual schools. And yet, to date, there is still no authorized Canadian history in French for the Acadian schools.

10. Journal of Education (April, 1912), 133.

11. Manual of School Law, 1921, 308.

12. Ibid. Nova Scotia school law states that, "No language except English shall be imperative on any pupil." Dr. Remi Chiasson, a former Inspector of Bilingual Schools, stated that while this situation did not occur too frequently it did arise at least three times in the period from 1952 to 1959 in the Acadian schools of eastern Nova Scotia. R.J. Chiasson, "Bilingualism in the Schools of Eastern Nova Scotia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1959), 197.

13. Annual Report (1937), 74. The Inspector for Clare and Argyle stated in 1937 that: "With the majority of pupils the only opportunity to hear or use English is confined absolutely to the school, year in and year out. It is the biggest problem ofover half of our teachers and we are working together in special oral English."

14. The Acadian Commission had recommended "that as far as practicable, in the French-speaking schools of this Province, only bilingual teachers should be employed." (See Appendix A.)

15. Annual Report (1913), 175.

16. Ibid. (1908-1925).

17. Ibid. (1925), 69.

18. Ibid. (1927), xxxiii, 86, 90.

19. Ibid. (1937), 49.

20. For a discussion of the emotional and political climate in the Acadian communities of Nova Scotia before and after the implementation of the Acadian Commission's recommendation, see Hubert, "Écoles Acadiennes de Nouvelle-Écosse," 44-46.

21. D'Entremont, "The Role of Religion Among the Acadians," 47.

22. Annual Report (1913), 173-178.

23. Hubert, "Écoles Acadiennes de Nouvelle-Écosse," 45.

24. Ibid., 45-46; Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français," 158-161.

25. Ibid., 159.

26. Annual Report (1933), xli-xlii.

27. Hubert, "Écoles Acadiennes de Nouvelle-Écosse," 45.

28. Ibid., 45-46; in 1939 the Department of Education Committee on Reorganization of the Curriculum summarized the objections of the Acadians to the bilingual programme and stated that "Instruction in French was not continued long enough to enable students to master their native tongue, and the prescription of English as the medium of instruction beyond Grade IV made it impossible for the French-speaking pupils to master thoroughly the school subjects as they should. It was pointed out that a very small number of French-speaking pupils went on to high school grades and that few completing the common school course had a mastery of either French or English." (Annual Report (1939), xxxviii). See also Appendix B.

29. For a lengthy and detailed description of the negotiations as they were actually undertaken by one of the chief Acadian leaders, see Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français," 162-172.

30. Journal of Education (March, 1939), 296-298.

31. D'Entremont, "The Role of Religion Among the Acadians," 46.

32. Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français," 162-172.

33. Regulations 27, 28, 29 Manual of the Educational Statutes and Regulations of the Council of Public Instruction of Nova Scotia (Halifax, 1895). See also Department of Education, The Education Act and Related Acts, Province of Nova Scotia (Halifax, 1956), 40, 84.

34. Sister Francis Xavier, "Educational Legislation in Nova Scotia and the Catholics," 74.

35. Annual Report (1932), xxix.

36. Ibid. (1930), 77.

37. The 1909 petition is the one known exception to these tactics. In a fairly recent description of the Acadian attitude throughout the Maritimes it was stated that, "We have patience galore and we have plenty of time. And that is how our nationalism is discreet and firm at the same time, respectful of authority, mindful of law and order, diplomatic and versatile, but enduring, persistent and eventually successful." (Savoie, "The Acadians: a Dynamic Minority," 86.)

38. See Hubert, "Écoles Acadiennes de Nouvelle-Écosse;" Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français;" Chiasson, "Bilingualism in the Schools of Eastern Nova Scotia."

39. Halifax Chronicle (January 14, 1939), 10.

40. Census figures show that between 1921 and 1941 Nova Scotian Acadians who claimed French as their mother-tongue declined in actual numbers and as a percentage of the population although the number of Nova Scotians who were of French origin increased in numbers in the province during this same period. For a more detailed discussion of these census figures, see Chapter IV.

41. Annual Report (1927), xiii.

42. Ibid. (1932), xxiv; ibid. (1933), xxxvii. Dalhousie University, St. Francis Xavier University and Acadia University became authorized provincial teacher training institutions in 1926. Mount Allison became the fourth member of this group a few years later.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER IV

1. Journal of Education (May, 1941), 507.
2. Ibid., 93.
3. Ibid.
4. Annual Report (1941), xxxv.
5. Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français," 172; Collège Sainte-Anne Cours d'Été Français 1941 (Church Point), 7.
6. Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français," 172.
7. Annual Report (1946), xxv.
8. Ibid. (1943), ix; ibid. (1944), xxxv.
9. Ibid. (1944), 58.
10. Ibid. (1945), 67.
11. Ibid. (1947), ix.
12. Comeau, "L'Enseignement du Français," 179.
13. Journal of Education (March, 1939), 296-298.
    The Acadian texts prescribed in 1939 remained unchanged and unsupplemented until 1950 when a new series of French readers and grammars was made available to the bilingual schools through the agency of the Nova Scotia School Book Bureau.
14. Ibid., 297.
15. H.P. Moffatt, "Educational Change in Nova Scotia, 1938-40," Journal of Education (Jan., 1941), 93.
16. Savoie, "The Acadians: a Dynamic Minority," 88.
17. Edwards, "La Survivance de la Culture Française," 71.
18. Annual Report (1947), 74, 93.
19. Ibid. (1948), 206.
20. Ibid. (1949), xxviii.

21. Ibid., 95.

22. M. Adelard Tremblay, "Les Acadiennes de la Baie Française: l'Histoire d'une Survivance," Revue d'Histoire de l'Amerique Française, XV (March, 1962), 547.

23. Ibid.

24. Annual Report (1949), x; ibid. (1951), vii.

25. R.J. Chiasson, "Bilingualism in the Schools of Eastern Nova Scotia," 199-201. The Committee also proposed that oral instruction in English be delayed until the second half of the first year of schooling and that instruction from English texts be postponed until the second half of the second school year. These recommendations were accepted by the Department of Education and are generally enforced in the bilingual schools today.

26. Program of Studies in the Schools of Nova Scotia 1953/1954 (Halifax: Department of Education, 1953), 39.

27. Annual Report (1953), 67.

28. Ibid. (1954), 30.

29. Ibid., 49.

30. Ibid. (1955), VII; ibid. (1956), xiii.

31. Ibid. (1956), 56.

32. Ibid. (1957), 35.

33. Ibid. (1954), vii.

34. Education Office Gazette (June, 1962), 4.

35. Annual Report (1951), 57.

36. Ibid. (1959), 50.

37. Ibid. (1960), 15.

38. Chiasson, "Bilingualism in the Schools of Eastern Nova Scotia," 197; D'Entremont, "The Role of Religion Among the Acadians," 48.

39. Annual Report (1930), xxiv.

40. Journal of Education (March, 1935), 197.

41. Annual Report (1936), 78. Of course, library facilities have been established at Ste. Anne's College and at some of the parochial high schools, but despite these efforts the total number of French library books in Nova Scotia remains comparatively small. Moreover, in November, 1964, the authors of this paper made a personal inspection of the library at Ste. Anne's College. The book collection is usually kept locked and is only open to students for a short period each day. Many books are uncatalogued. The catalogue cards for those volumes that are processed are not properly subject-indexed. The collection itself is small and suffers from a lack of current material. It is also improperly housed in a room that is poorly lit. Because this room does not possess proper ventilation facilities, many of the books are not in a good state of preservation. To date this collection has never been supervised by a professional librarian, but has usually been assigned to some professor interested in maintaining the library facilities at the College.

42. Annual Report (1956), xv.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid. (1937), xxxix, xli-xlii.

45. Ibid. (1946), 97.

46. Journal of Education (1938), 174.

47. Chiasson, "Bilingualism in the Schools of Eastern Nova Scotia," 277.

48. For a discussion of the economic situation faced by Nova Scotian Acadians see M. Wade (ed.), Canadian Dualism (Toronto, 1960), 386-387; H. Thorburn, "Biculturalism in the Maritime Provinces." La Société de l'Assomption has

played a very important part in the economic and social life of the Acadians. It has been a leader in organizing cooperative movements among the farmers and it also operates a flourishing life insurance programme which has greatly contributed to the economic security of the Acadian community. Ambrose Comeau introduced the bill in the Provincial Assembly which incorporated the Society in 1907. See Debates (1907), 124.

49. Annual Report (1941), xi. In 1941 the vote from local funds to support the average rural and village schools was $408. The average urban school received between $1,591 and $2,009. Even after equalizing grants by the province were made, $276 was spent on urban classrooms for every $100 on rural and village classrooms.

50. Ibid. (1962), xxiii.

51. Ibid. (1950), xx.

52. Ibid. (1962), 25.

53. H.F. Munro, The Public Schools of Nova Scotia (Halifax, 1927).

54. Nova Scotia, Royal Commission on Provincial Development and Rehabilitation Report, Vol. V (Halifax, 1944).

55. Nova Scotia, Royal Commission on Public School Finance in Nova Scotia Report (Halifax, 1954).

56. The range of articles in these journals is quite impressive. Over the years they have published everything from short discussions of school nature walks to scholarly comments on provincial history by local historians.

57. Chiasson, "Bilingual Schools in Eastern Nova Scotia," 202-204. There is a strong justification for a lower pupil-teacher ratio in the bilingual

schools. Acadian pupils are required to pass the same English high school examinations as the English-speaking students. Therefore the teacher must cover all the main texts required in the Program of Studies for the Schools of Nova Scotia. In addition to this requirement, he is also expected to teach a comprehensive French study programme. Thus both teachers and students have a much heavier work-load than their counterparts in the English-speaking schools. Such circumstances require a lower pupil-teacher ratio if instruction is to prove effective.

58. Annual Report (1959), 50.

59. Tremblay, "Les Acadiennes de la Baie Française," 534; College Sainte-Anne Annuaire Générale 1964-1965, 59-63. Although almost all of the courses at the College are in French, the entire faculty is fluent in both languages. The College has recognized that its students from Nova Scotia are usually not as well grounded in French grammar, reading or writing as the pupils coming from Quebec. It therefore offers a remedial course in French for first year Acadian students.

60. These figures are based on data from the censuses of Canada from 1921 to 1961. Acadians have increased from 11% of the Nova Scotian population in 1921 to approximately 15% of the provincial population in 1961. However, as already indicated, the increase in numbers has been more than matched by the decrease in the total number of persons speaking French. The contemporary situation was well characterized by Thorburn, "Biculturalism in the Maritime Provinces," 391: "The race then is between the higher birth rate of the Acadians and the rate at which they are being absorbed into the English community. In New Brunswick the French culture is winning; but in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, the

English is gradually assimilating the French."

61. French radio programmes can be received in Nova Scotia. As of 1964, the Cheticamp region in western Cape Breton acquired the proper reception facilities to be able to tune into French language television broadcasts emanating from Quebec. However, the majority of the programmes now being received in Nova Scotia are, of course, in English.

62. A classic example of poor English comprehension was recorded in the Journal of Education (October, 1925), 261. A school examiner asked pupils to define the duties of a citizen. One student replied that they were excise duties and ad valorem duties.

63. Ibid. (Oct., 1930), 249.

64. Annual Report (1947), 110.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid. (1952), 112.

67. John A. Ross, High School Achievement in the Atlantic Provinces ("The CAC High School Testing Project Report No.1," Halifax, 1959), 13.

68. Journal of Education (Jan., 1932), 54, 56.

69. Annual Report (1932), xxi.

70. Ibid. (1937), 102.

71. Ibid. (1960), 16.

72. Acadian educators have usually adopted the proposition that students should proceed from the "known" to the "unknown" and that they should not attempt to study English until they had a sound knowledge of French. One part of the study undertaken by Mr. R.J. Chiasson for his Ph.D. thesis was an achievement test for a variety of subjects in the school curriculum. These tests were administered to bilingual and monolingual (i.e., English-speaking) students in eastern

Nova Scotia. His findings showed that monolingual students scored significantly higher on these tests than bilingual students of the same age and grade. The 1959 tests administered by the Central Advisory Committee confirmed Mr. Chiasson's results. While students in the Maritime Provinces generally scored lower in English and mathematics than American students in the same age group, the gap in performance showed a significant decrease when the scores of bilingual students were eliminated from the general Atlantic Provinces test results. However, these findings may simply be a reflection of a lower standard of teaching and a poorly integrated course of study in the Acadian schools, rather than a basic defect in the idea of bilingual education.. For a clear and concise argument for early and thorough instruction in a second language see Charles D. Herisson, "Bilingualism and English-speaking Maritimers," Atlantic Advocate (May, 1962), 33-38.

73. Journal of Education (Nov., 1955), 46-48.

APPENDIX A

ACADIAN SCHOOL REGULATIONS[1]

(1) A bilingual visitor of schools in French-speaking sections thruout the Province shall be appointed who may be known as the Bilingual Visitor of Acadian Schools and whose duties will be supplementary to those of the regular inspector of each inspectorial division. It shall be his special duty to aid the inspectors and Superintendent in making the schools in French settlements more efficient in every respect authorized by law, his command of the French language being intended to enable him to supplement as circumstances require, the work of the inspectors.

In carrying out these general directions he shall as far as possible co-operate with the inspectors and like them also report monthly on his work to the Superintendent; and at the end of the year present a report on the state and progress of education in the Acadian schools in the different parts of the Province, with reasoned recommendations for such improvements as he may be able to specify.

(2) A bilingual course of a few weeks shall be given free each year during vacation time in the Provincial Normal College at Truro, to French speaking teachers to prepare them to teach English colloquially to French pupils coming to school without knowledge of English; in order that by the time the pupils have completed the first four grades of the public school program, all work of instruction can be carried on effectively thereafter in English. Travelling expenses to and from this course shall be paid at the rate of five cents per mile.

(3) In schools where a large number of pupils attend who cannot understand English, the trustees are authorized to allow the use of the prescribed French Readers for such pupils, provided the teacher is capable of giving colloquial instruction in English as specified in the foregoing regulation and in giving it so effectively that by the end of the fourth year, the pupils can henceforward be effectively instructed thru the medium of the English language. But no language except English shall be imperative on any pupil.

1. Extracts from Manual of School Law, Nova Scotia, 1921, 308, 309, 310 and 311.

(4) As many educational authorities believe a colloquial system (such as the Berlitz) to be the most expeditious and economical method of acquiring a new language, school trustees shall continue to be free to employ English speaking teachers under any such conditions as specified in the foregoing regulations.

THE ACADIAN COMMISSION.

The origin of these regulations, was the desire to carry out the unanimous recommendations of the Acadian Commission which sat in the month of April, 1902.

On the 18th April, 1902, it was recommended to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor:-

"That the following gentlemen be appointed as Commissioners under the provisions of Chapter 12, Revised Statutes, 1900, for the purpose of investigating the best methods of teaching English in the schools situate in the French districts of the province and generally to make any suggestions to the Education Department which would have the effect of bringing about greater educational progress in such districts.

Rev. P. Dagnaud, of Church Point.
W. E. Maclellan, of Halifax.
Prof. A. G. Macdonald, of Antigonish.
Rev. W. M. LeBlanc, of Arichat.
Alexander McKay, Supervisor of Schools, Halifax.
Hon. A. H. Comeau, of Meteghan River.
Rev. A. E. Mombourquette, of East Margaree.
M. J. Doucet, M.P.P., Grand Etang."

The Commission was promptly appointed, and after examination of many witnesses and due deliberation, the following report was made, and afterwards presented to the Council of Public Instruction:

To the Honorable
Alfred Gilpin Jones
Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia.

May it Please Your Honor.

We, the undersigned members of the Commission appointed by your Honor "for the purpose of investigating the best methods of teaching English in the schools situate in the French-speaking districts of the Province, and generally to make

any suggestions to the Educational Department which would have the effect of bringing about greater educational progress in such districts under the provisions of Chap. 12, of the Revised Statutes of 1900," beg leave to report as follows:

Your Commission have devoted twelve long sessions, extending over more than a week to enquiries concerning and the consideration of this highly important subject. They have had before them and carefully examined a number of witnesses from the various parts of the Province coming directly within the scope of their Commission. They have summoned and heard the testimony of expert language teachers, both English and French. They have listened to and weighed the statements of Government Inspectors having the supervision of French-speaking schools and of teachers in such schools. They have thoroughly discussed and most faithfully considered the problem set before them in all its bearings.

Their investigations and deliberations have been marked thruout by the greatest harmony and by the conspicuous absence of any mere sectional, partisan or racial spirit. They have been able to reach the conclusions which they are about to submit to your Honour not only unanimously but without friction or unpleasantness of any sort.

The first enquiries of your Commissioners were naturally directed towards determining the relative standing of French and English-speaking schools, with a view to discovering whether the former are being or have been subjected to any considerable disadvantage under our educational system as compared with the latter. All the evidence before your Commissioners goes conclusively to show that, while there is no appreciable difference in intellectual capacity between French and English-speaking pupils or between French and English-speaking districts, the average rate of progress of the former is considerably less than that of the latter. Weighty testimony was forthcoming to show that while this is the case, French-speaking pupils are generally more regular school attendants and often more eager learners than English-speaking pupils in the same Inspectorial Districts.

Your Commissioners have unanimously reached the conclusion that the French-speaking sections of the Province have been and continue to be at a very serious disadvantage in the matter of education. They believe a measure of that disadvantage to be incident to and inseparable from their position as small French-speaking communities in the midst of larger English-speaking ones. They believe further, however, that a considerable part of that disadvantage is

due to misconceptions on the part of more or less incompetent teachers and to lack of understanding on the part of officials and others of the aim and spirit of the school law of the Province and to some extent to certain remedial defects in the School Law and Regulations themselves.

Your Commissioners find that the fundamental error in dealing with the French Schools, which must be held responsible for many of their short-comings, has been the assumption that they must be taught exclusively in English. They find that with startling uniformity and persistency attempts have been made and are being made to educate children from French-speaking homes and with none but French-speaking playmates by means of the English language alone, sometimes from the lips of teachers who can speak nothing but English. They find from the testimony of experts that even were such teachers masters of the approved modern methods of teaching a foreign language, but meagre results could be anticipated from their best efforts under such conditions. They find that with the inexperienced, ill-taught and often otherwise incompetent teachers ordinarily available for employment in such schools the efforts, however conscientious, made to teach the children to speak English are, as might be anticipated, largely a failure. They find also that, while futile attempts to teach them English are thus being put forth, the general education of French-speaking pupils is being more or less seriously or sometimes even totally neglected.

With a view to remedying these defects and redressing serious grievances which they believe should be removed as speedily as possible, your Commissioners have unanimously reached the following conclusions which they submit to your Honor, in the hope that they may be approved by you and by your Council of Public Instruction, and that due effect may be given to them in the future regulations and directions of the Educational Department of the Province. Your Commissioners are unanimously of the opinion,-

First, "that English can be best and most effectively taught in the French-speaking school sections of Nova Scotia by the daily use in speaking and writing of that language, taught according to the most approved methods, from the pupils' first entrance into school, to be followed by the use of the prescribed English readers as soon as they can be intelligently used by such pupils, not later than the 3rd or 4th grades."

Second, "that the general education of French-speaking pupils should be carried on concurrently with their acquisition of

the use of English, and that this can be successfully accomplished only by the use of their vernacular; that, therefore, as long as necessary they should, while learning English, be taught the other subjects of the curriculum in French, provided, however, that the use or study of French shall be optional with every pupil."

Third, "that as far as practicable, in the French-speaking schools of this Province, only bilingual teachers should be employed."

Your Commissioners have been forced to this last conclusion because they are convinced that only French-speaking teachers are ordinarily competent to manage and properly instruct French-speaking pupils from French-speaking homes in French-speaking communities during the earlier years of their school attendance or until they have acquired a working knowledge of the English language. They believe that the difficulties of teaching the use of English under the conditions prevailing in our French-speaking sections are so greatly increased that it would be not far from impossible for even the most expert of language teachers to carry on the primary education of the pupils by means of it alone.

Your Commissioners have, further, unanimously agreed upon the following recommendations which they make to your Honor as the logical outcome of their above conclusions:-

First, "that a special series of French reading-books suitable for grades one to four should be prescribed for use in French-speaking school sections."

Second, "inasmuch as the evidence given before your Commissioners shows conclusively that the majority of schools in French-speaking sections are not making satisfactory progress largely in consequence of faulty methods in teaching English, that the Council of Public Instruction should provide a short course, of some weeks' duration, during the summer holidays in the Normal School, for the purpose of imparting to bilingual teachers the most approved methods of teaching English in such sections, and that teachers attending such course be treated in the matter of travelling expenses in the same manner as is now provided for those attending the regular sessions of the Normal School."

Third, "that, for the future, inspectors of Schools be required to make a special annual report to the Department of Education on the general progress of such schools, but particularly on the progress made in the study and use of English and on the methods adopted in teaching it."

All of which is dutifully and most respectfully submitted by your Commissioners, who have the honor to be,

Your Honor's obedient servants,

W. E. Maclellan, Chairman
A. H. Comeau
A. G. Macdonald, A.M.
P. M. Dagnaud
W. M. LeBlanc
M. J. Doucet
A. E. Mombourquette
A. McKay

Halifax, April 28th, 1902.

APPENDIX B

PROGRAMME OF STUDIES FOR ACADIAN SCHOOLS[1]

In 1902 a special Commission appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor examined the education of French-speaking children in the Province, and finding that "the French-speaking sections of the Province have been and continue to be at a very serious disadvantage in the matter of Education" they made recommendations to the Government of the day with a view to improving the situation. The recommendations, briefly, were (1) that in the lower grades instruction in the regular school subjects be carried out in French; (2) that instruction in English be begun in the first grade "colloquially" and carried on in such a manner that at the end of the fourth grade instruction in the regular school subjects could be carried on in English; (3) that bilingual teachers be employed; (4) that a series of French readers be prepared for the first four grades; (5) that a special short course be given at the Normal College for bilingual teachers; (6) that these schools be inspected separately from the English-speaking schools and that a special report be made each year on the work done in French-speaking schools.

These recommendations were carried out, and the programme in French-speaking schools today is based on the reports of the 1902 Commission. However, from time to time French-speaking citizens of the Province have complained to the Department of Education that the implementation of the Commission's recommendations did not remove the disadvantage mentioned in the Commission's report. They point out that the instruction in French is not continued long enough to enable the students to master their native tongue, and that the prescription of English as the medium of instruction for all subjects as early as the fourth grade makes it impossible for the French-speaking student to master the school subjects as he should. As evidence of the failure of the programme they point to the very small number of French-speaking pupils enrolled in high school grades and to the fact that the great majority of pupils who complete the common school course in French-speaking schools have a mastery of neither English nor French. This "falling between two stools" they state, comes about from the too abrupt transition to English as the medium of instruction and to the fact that French is dropped as a subject of instruction at the end of Grade IV and not taken up again until the subject is begun anew in the high school-with a programme designed wholly for English-speaking pupils.

1. Journal of Education, (March 1939), 296-297

When the committee on reorganization of the curriculum was appointed in 1931 they considered, among other things, ways in which the situation in French-speaking schools could be improved. Their general recommendations were as follows:

1. In Grades 1-V1 inclusive all the regular school subjects shall be taught through the medium of the French language, with these exceptions:

   (a) Arithmetic in Grades 1V-V1 shall be taught through the medium of English.

   (b) Approximately ten per cent of the school recitation time in Grades 1-V1 shall be given to instruction in spoken and written English.

2. In Grades V11-1X instruction in Language and Literature in both French and English should be continued; the textbooks in History should be in French; all other textbooks should be in English but teachers may carry out instruction through the medium of either language.

3. In Grades X-X11 the prescribed subjects and textbooks should be same as those recommended for English-speaking pupils.

If these recommendations were carried out they would meet the objections to the present programme by (1) carrying on instruction in French continuously from Grade 1 to Grade X11; (2) making the transition from French to English as the medium of instruction less abrupt, through the gradual introduction of English from Grade 1V to Grade 1X. The weakness of the recommendations is in the proportion of time recommended for the study of English in Grades 1-V1. Ten percent of the time would scarcely be enough to prepare the pupils for the use of English as a medium of instruction in some subjects in Grades V11-1X. Twenty percent of the time in Grades 1-V1 would seem to be more reasonable. This would give ample time for instruction in French and for general education through the medium of French, and with the help of outside contacts would assure a reasonable mastery of English at the beginning of Grade V11.

A detailed programme of studies has been drawn up, based on these recommendations, and could be put into force at any time if the general recommendations were approved. Included in the detailed programme is a series of textbooks for instruction in French from Grade 1 up. If the general recommendations were followed, the present History text used in

Grades V11 and V111 would have to be translated into French, or a text in Canadian History already written in French would have to be selected. Otherwise, textbooks now in print are available for the new programme.

APPENDIX C

CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT PETITIONS, MEETINGS, RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER ACTIONS RELATING TO ACADIAN EDUCATION IN NOVA SCOTIA

1879

Acadians petitioned for a high school in the Clare school district. The petition was approved.

1892

The Acadian legislator, Ambrose Comeau, successfully introduced a bill to incorporate Ste. Anne's College and to permit it to grant degrees.

1895

In October the twelfth convention of the Provincial Education Association passed a resolution asking the government of Nova Scotia to allow pupils in French-speaking districts textbooks in their own language, at least in reading and grammar, "in order to facilitate their acquiring a knowledge of English". No action was taken by the provincial government regarding the resolution.

1900

On May 17 and 18, the first meeting of the French Teachers' Institute took place at Church Point. The President was Rev. J. J. Sullivan, Special Visitor for Acadian Schools.

Speeches and addresses were delivered by the Rev. J. M. Dagnaud, the Rev. J. J. Sullivan, Hon. A. H. Comeau, M. Adolphe Theriault, Dr. MacKay, Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia. It was agreed that French should be the sole medium of instruction in all subjects in the Acadian schools for the first four years of schooling. In addition, the textbook Les Grandes Inventions Modernes was condemned and the Council of Public Instruction was asked to remove it from the list of prescribed texts.

1901

On May 16 and 17, the second meeting of the French Teachers' Institute took place at West Pubnico, N. S. The Institute recommended a new series of French texts to replace those prescribed for the bilingual schools.

1902

The Acadian Commission. For details See Appendix A.

1904

On May 19 and 20, the fourteenth meeting of the Acadian Institute met at Tusket Wedge, Nova Scotia.

A Committee on Texts reported that:

1) The prescribed French texts were too difficult.
2) Teaching English and French concurrently during the first years of schooling confused the student and was an unsound teaching method.
3) Texts with French on one side of the page and English on the other caused forced, mechanical translations.

Based on the Committee's findings, the Institute resolved that:

1) Although the Council of Public Instruction had the power to prescribe texts for bilingual schools, Acadian teachers should be free to exercise their proper judgment regarding the choice of French books to be used in their classrooms.

1909

A petition signed by over 2000 Acadians was sent to the Nova Scotia Government. This petition demanded that a French history text - L'Histoire Élémentaire du Canada be used in all Acadian schools.

1913

From June 4 - 6 the Acadian Institute met at West Pubnico, Nova Scotia.. It was agreed that because of the deficiencies in the bilingual school programme the Council of Public Instruction should be asked:

1) To prescribe a special examination in French for all Acadian candidates for a teacher's license. This examination should replace the one that they were [illegible] required to pass in English.
2) To replace the grammar then in use with a grammar written in French.

1922

A petition was signed by prominent Acadians requesting more French instruction and revised textbooks for the bilingual schools.

The signers were Hon. Willie Comeau, Abbé A. E. Mombourquette, Dr. Amedee, F. G. Comeau, Insp. Louis d'Entremont.

1926

In December a petition was sent by a group of prominent Acadians to the Nova Scotia educational authorities. It requested more French instruction for the bilingual schools.

The signers were Prof. Willie Belliveau, and Insp. Louis d'Entremont. (Other Acadian leaders also signed this petition but their identity cannot be determined from the information available).

1927

An Acadian petition was sent to the provincial government in January. It requested more French instruction and new French texts for the Acadian schools.

1928

A meeting of Acadian teachers was held at Pubnico, Nova Scotia, in May. The teachers requested that more time be set aside for French instruction in bilingual schools.

A meeting of the Comité Langue et Education de la Société Nationale l'Assomption convened at Ste. Anne's College. The meeting was organized by C. A. Latour, Inspector of Separate Schools for Ottawa. Aside from the Committee and Mr. Latour the members present were: Inspector d'Entremont, Inspector Benoit, Professor Willie Belliveau, J. P. Doucet and Joseph-Édouard Comeau.

It was recommended that:

1) Changes were essential in some of the French texts for Grades I-IV.
2) A committee should be chosen to select suitable French texts for Grades V-VIII, since it was felt that Acadian children should be taught most subjects in French.

1928 or 1929 (?)

An Acadian petition to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly requested that:

1) Qualifications for bilingual teachers should include:
    A) Passing tests in French grammar and literature as part of the Provincial High School Examinations.
    B) A special French paper as part of the requirements for Grades IX-XII.
2) A compulsory bilingual course offered for credit at the Truro Normal School.
3) A bilingual school should be one in which 50 per cent or more of the students were French-speaking.
4) The readers for Grades I-IV should be revised.
5) There should be prescribed French texts in Canadian history and geography.

(This petition is discussed by Mr. R. J. Chiasson in his thesis. No other reference to it has been found and the number and names of the signers of this petition are not known).

1930

The numerous Acadian petitions led to the formation of a special government committee.

Its members were: Inspector d'Entremont, Inspector Benoit, C. H. Mercer, A. W. Cunningham, Joseph-Édouard Comeau.

1930 (continued)

The committee recommended:

1) That a new series of French readers should be used in Grades I-X.

2) In Grades XI-XII Acadian students should use the same texts as English-speaking students, but they should also study a French grammar.

1931-1933

In March, 1931, the Nova Scotia government established a committee to work with the Comité Langue et Education de La Société Nationale l'Assomption and to prepare recommendations regarding changes in the bilingual programme. Its deliberations were contained in the Report for the General Committee on Acadian Studies, 1933.

The recommendations were:

1) French should be the major language of instruction in French speaking areas.

2) In mixed French-English speaking areas, provincial law should define and protect the rights of the minority group.

3) Since revision of the English curriculum has been completed, 1933 would be an opportune time to revise the bilingual programme.

4) Acadian students writing high school examinations should be permitted to do so in French except for certain subjects relating to English grammar, literature, and so on.

1939

Revised Acadian school regulations were adopted. For the provisions of these regulations see Appendix B.

1950

A Committee on Acadian texts was appointed by the Nova Scotia Department of Education.

Its members were Dr. A. B. Morrison, Director of Curriculum and Research for Nova Scotia, Inspector J. A. Comeau, Professor Stanley Edwards, Mlle. P. d'Entremont.

The recommendations were:

1) That oral English instruction be delayed in Acadian schools until the second half of the primary school year.

2) That written English be delayed in bilingual schools until the second half of the second school year.

3) That a new series of bilingual readers be introduced.

1955

A committee of Acadian teachers recommended a new French reader for Grade V. The Department of Education accepted this recommendation.

1957-1958

Petitions to the Department of Education by the School Boards and Home and School Associations of Inverness and Richmond Counties recommended a lower pupil-teacher ratio for bilingual schools.

1958

A committee of the Department of Education was established to study the requests embodied in the Home and School Association petitions. Its members were: Chief Inspector of Schools, H. N. Nason, J. A. Comeau, Inspector for Clare and Argyle, George Kent, Inspector for Inverness County, Mr. A. J. Saulnier, Rural Supervisor for Inverness County, Mr. Maurice Belliveau, Rural Supervisor for Clare and Argyle, R. J. Chiasson, Inspector for Richmond County.

The recommendations were:

1) A reduction in the maximum pupil-teacher ratio for credit and finance summer study by bilingual teachers in French universities outside the province.

At another meeting this committee also recommended:

1) Revised texts for bilingual schools.

1964-1965

An improved and enriched programme of high school French study for Acadian students was being formulated by the School Inspector and teachers of the Clare and Argyle region.

APPENDIX D

PROPOSED STUDY CONCERNING ACADIAN EDUCATION IN NOVA SCOTIA

The proposed study will be divided into three main sections. The first section, by far the most general and superficial, will be concerned with the education of the Acadians in the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries. Emphasis will be placed upon the backwardness of Acadian education during these centuries and also some reference will be made to the special role of the Roman Catholic Church as well as to the policy of the provincial government.

The second section of the proposed study will deal with the reasons for the appointment of the Acadian Commission in 1902 and the Commission's immediate results. The reports of the school inspectors will be carefully examined for the period of two or three decades preceding the ap pointment of the Commission of 1902. It is to be hoped that such an examination together with a survey of governmental and Church policy will cast some light upon the education of the Acadians at the turn of the century. A similar approach could be taken for the two decades following the Acadian Commission.

The third section of the study will be concerned with Acadian education from 1932 to 1964. The report of a kind of unofficial Acadian Commission in the late 20's and 30's will be examined as will be the policy of the Nova Scotia government during the period.

Throughout the last two sections special stress will be placed upon the role played by St. Anne's College. In addition, it is to be hoped that something will be said about the influence of the Acadians in New Brunswick and the French Canadians in Quebec upon educational developments in Nova Scotia.

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